

NEW MASSES

JANUARY 26, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Spain

Six Months of War

Special Number

Antonio
Mije

Anna Louise
Strong

Paul
Nizan

Pablo de la
Torriente-Brau

Ralph
Bates

Joseph R.
Brodsky

James
Hawthorne

Theodore
Draper

Rolfe
Humphries

Albert
Maltz

Robert
Forsythe



WE offer this special enlarged issue to mark six months of the struggle of Spanish democracy against Spanish fascism and foreign fascist intervention. We hope that it will spur our readers to aid the cause. Agencies through which help can be given are mentioned on the editorial page.

As we write, the *Berengaria* is plowing towards New York bearing "Fighting Bob" Minor, former editor of this



magazine, who has spent some weeks on the Madrid front. He has been in the thick of the fighting and in the thick of the political and social re-orientation which has been going on apace in Spain under the impact of the civil war. His report on what he heard and saw will be front-page news. We are happy to report his first public statement to America will be under the joint auspices of the New Masses and the American Society for Technical Aid to Spanish Democracy.

This will take place at a meeting in New York's Mecca Temple, Wednesday evening, February 10. The meeting will be in the nature of an all-star event on Spain. The other speakers will be Anna Louise Strong, who writes in this issue on leading personalities in Spain (she arrived in New York from Madrid last week), and Ralph Bates, novelist (another contributor to this issue), who came here a month ago from an extended stay in Spain. Malcolm Cowley, one of the editors of the *New Republic*, will be chairman. Reserve your seats now!

It is regrettable that on the Spanish question we are forced to engage in polemics with the Socialists, as we do in an editorial in this issue. It is the Trotsky influence in that party which has brought about this turn of affairs. And apropos of this, it is perhaps worth reporting that when some Communist editors were talking about this situation the other day, several expressed the belief that the presence of Leon Trotsky in Mexico might well result in his becoming the actual, if not the official leader of the American Socialist Party unless honest leaders and the rank and file of that party take decisive steps to prevent it.

The opposition of the Mexican trade-union movement to the granting of "political asylum" to Trotsky is explained in an article by Vicente Lombardo Toledano which we will publish next week.

Who's Who

ANTONIO MIJE, who gives the Madrid government's view on the immediate military situation in the first article in this issue, is a leading member of the Spanish Communist Party.

Anna Louise Strong is the Moscow correspondent of *Soviet Russia Today* and the author of *I Change Worlds* and other works. She is now at work on two other books, one of which is to be published shortly by Henry Holt & Co.

Paul Nizan, foreign editor of

BETWEEN OURSELVES

L'Humanité, official organ of the French Communist Party, has contributed to our pages before. Nizan's article in this issue was translated by Herbert Rosenblum.

Joseph R. Brodsky is one of the chief counsel of the International Labor Defense.

James Hawthorne, our Madrid correspondent, has sent us the dramatic story of the no-man's-land encounter of two brothers, one in the loyalist and the other in the fascist ranks. We will publish it next week or later.

Theodore Draper is foreign editor of the *NEW MASSES*.

Albert Maltz has been a frequent contributor to this magazine, and is best known for his short stories, a collection of which is soon to be issued by International Publishers.

Rolfe Humphries is a poet and critic whose work has often appeared in our pages.

Leon Dennen has likewise been a frequent contributor, as well as a translator of articles from the Russian.

F. W. Dupee, as previously noted, is pinch-hitting as literary editor during the absence of Isidor Schneider, who is on his way to the Soviet Union to work under a Guggenheim fellowship.

Philip Stevenson has been a frequent contributor to Review and Comment.

The painting by Tschacbasov on page 30 is on exhibition in his show at the A.C.A. Gallery, New York, until January 23. A showing of the paintings of Abraham Harrington, one of which is reproduced on page 15, begins January 24 at the same gallery.

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Two weeks notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Mr. Harrington, whose work hangs in many important collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Biro-Bidjan Museum, U.S.S.R., is a member of the faculty and board of control of the American Artists' School in New York.

Anton Refregier is another American Artists' School faculty member who seems to be a very busy man. He will be represented in a forthcoming A.C.A. Gallery edition of social prints by his drawing which appears on page 8, and when Erika Mann's *Pepper Mill* revue goes on at the New School this weekend, it will do so before sets which he designed. Furthermore, when the New Dance Group repeats its anti-Nazi ballet program at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York Sunday evening, January 24, the décor (reportedly the first time a dance group has used full stage sets) will be Refregier's.

What's What

MARK a couple of dates (besides the Spain meeting we mentioned over there in the first column) down in your book. The first is a New Masses studio party to be held Saturday evening, February 6, in Studio 503, Steinway Hall, N. Y. There will be dancing, refreshments, and entertainment, and a half dollar will admit you. The second date to watch is Monday, February 15, when the New Masses will be host at a preview of John Howard Lawson's new play *Marching Song*. The Theatre Union has taken the Nora Bayes Theater for this production, but you should reserve your seats for this preview through our office.

Ernst Toller, German anti-fascist playwright, protests that his requiem, *Man and Woman*, which we published a year or so ago, has been performed without notification to him. He points out that production rights for this work must be obtained through the Dramatists' Play Service, 9 East 38th St., N. Y.

Poets and those interested in poetry will be especially interested in a feature planned for our issue of February 16. On that occasion we will publish a collection of verse by hitherto unpublished poets which has been selected by S. Funaroff.

Flashbacks

"FOR the first time in history a man at his death was mourned in every country of the world." Thus Ralph Fox, who recently lost his life in Spain, ended his biography of Lenin, who died Jan. 21, 1924. . . .



Bearing pictures of the czar, icons, church banners, and following a priest, the workers of St. Petersburg went on Jan. 22, 1905, to petition the Little White Father for a constituent assembly. In front of the Winter Palace, troops fired on the unarmed workers, killing 200, wounding 800. . . . As more and more of the world's young authors enlist in the International Brigade to defend Spanish democracy, an earlier democrat comes to mind. Poet George Gordon Byron, who died fighting for the national liberation of Greece, was born into British aristocracy, Jan. 22, 1788.

NEW MASSES

JANUARY 26, 1937



William Sanderson

The Military Outlook

The following cable was sent January 18, giving the official view of the immediate war situation

By National War Commissioner Antonio Mije

YOU want to know how long the war will last, but it is impossible to hazard a guess. Speaking, however, from the viewpoint of one experienced in military matters, I can say that our greatest expectation for an early favorable turn of events rests on the fact that we have created an army which can now be considered regular. Its officers and men are very mature politically, and the ideology guiding both has reinforced and channelized organization in the firm road of a regular people's army of iron structure.

This is the point of departure for the offensive-defensive stabilization on all fronts. You have witnessed the finest proof of the substance of our army in the repeated failures of the armies of international fascism to conquer Madrid.

One question which must arise in the minds of our friends in other countries is: is an early broad-scale government counter-offensive probable? To that, for obvious reasons, we can reply only in general terms. We have strengthened our lines considerably in the course of

the six months' struggle. We will soon be in a position to change them favorably. First steps have already been taken. The heroism of our people has hardened definitively, which enormously simplifies the struggle. Their regular army will be the bedrock foundation of the next movement.

Considering the war at the present time in its general aspects, we must remember that the rebel rising had as its background the steady progress of the Spanish people toward democracy. The rebel militarists of the feudal caste and the reactionary capitalists sought to break the progressive rhythm of the popular masses by staging a revolt against the legitimate government. The struggle, then, was launched on a national scale between the people and the reactionary castes. But in the course of this struggle, there came at the outset international fascism's aid to the rebels and open participation by the fascist Powers in the Spanish civil war.

These fundamental characteristics transformed the legitimate government's war

against a group of rebels into a war of national liberation, into a struggle against a foreign invasion. The Spanish people no longer fights against the rebels, but against German and Italian forces with German and Italian officers and armament.

Looking at the immediate international situation, and comparing it with the situation two, four, and six months ago, in terms of its favorableness to our cause, I would say that undoubtedly these six months of struggle and, more concretely, the open intervention of the fascist Powers, have put the masses of the whole world unalterably on our side. The danger of world war through extension of the Spanish conflict increases international aid to the legitimate government. This atmosphere of world solidarity is reflected clearly in the changed position of democratic countries, which are now coming over to our side. Internationally, the problems of the Spanish people become better known every day, at the same time finding an ever more favorable reception.

People of Spain

An internationally famous journalist sketches a series of vivid pen-portraits of some outstanding personalities

By Anna Louise Strong

WE were sitting (January 2, 1937) in a sunlit room of Hotel España in Valencia. Under the windows roared the over-abundant life of the Plaza Castellar. From the raised central part of the square a great mass meeting—reports on current events under the Ministry of Public Instruction—strove with noisy loud-speakers against the answering tumult of street cars and autos. Scores of street booths hawked their wares, chiefly decorated caps and badges, whereby purchasers declared their allegiance to their favorite trade union or party.

I commented on the tremendous confidence of the people, which had struck me like a battering-ram in those first days in Spain. The sense of life in their own hands, of unbeatable power. How was this to be reconciled with the undoubted fact that Franco held half the Spanish territory? Were all these confident people of Alicante, Valencia, Barcelona—those girls who waved branches of oranges at us and shouted “*Salud!*” from the roadway—living in a fool’s paradise?

My companion, an American woman who has lived ten years in Spain—“not interested in politics, you know, but I dearly love the Spanish people, so of course I’ve got to hate that beast of a Franco, who is worse than Alfonso and Primo de Rivera combined”—gave me one key to the problem. “Franco has some territory, lots of foreign arms, and a more experienced army. But the government has all the industrial centers, and nine-tenths of the talent, brains, and guts in Spain. What counts in the end is—people.”

It suddenly flashed across me that never in any previous three weeks of my life had I met so many brilliant people as I had seen in my brief tour through the battle-fronts and towns of Spain. The variety of them, the striking individuality of them. Spain prizes talent and individuality. It is not without significance that one of the first acts of the government in arranging the evacuation of Madrid was to bring to Valencia thirty prominent leaders of “culture”—famous artists and scientists—and install them in a beautifully furnished House of Culture in Valencia, supplying them with studios and laboratories and maintenance in order that their work for mankind may continue undisturbed by the shock of battle.

Here in the House of Culture I met Victorio Macho, one of Spain’s leading sculptors; J. Moreno Villo, poet and painter; Professor Moles, a physicist known for his work on the atom; Professor del Rio-Hortega, one of the world’s most famous histologists. The Valencia government had taken care to protect not

only their lives from the Madrid bombardments, but the far more fragile structure of their scientific and artistic work, which they carry on quite undisturbed by politics.

To the journalist, however, the most interesting and vivid human figures are those of the political world. Let me give brief glimpses of four people, all of different parties, all amazingly different, all bringing important contributions to the People’s Front in Spain.

The most “American” person I met in Spain was Julio Alvarez Del Vayo, foreign minister. Swift, punctual, efficient, a former journalist whose sense of publicity values rivals that of Roosevelt, he is certainly the most utterly informal foreign minister in the world. His ability to dispose of business very accurately and rapidly enables him to be extremely accessible, even if only for two minutes at a time. But when he is compelled to cut short an interview he does it in a manner which makes his refusal even more flattering.

My first appointment, for instance, Del Vayo was compelled to cancel owing to a sudden press of emergency business. Instead of sending the postponement through a secretary, as most other officials of equal prominence would have done, he came breezily and smilingly into the outer office to shake hands:

“You know—this *Koenigsberg* cruiser—an unexpected ultimatum to the Basque government. They’ve phoned me from Bilbao and now I must at once get in touch with the minister of war, then telephone London and Paris and arrange the answer to the *Koenigsberg* before midnight . . . so sorry . . . couldn’t you drop in tomorrow morning for a real talk?” Could I? After he so informally admitted me to the whole process of diplomacy!

Next morning the talk turned, among other things, on some of the medical and technical help offered by American friends to the Spanish democracy. He said: “You know America; are such and such things possible?” I made a casual suggestion about ways and methods which met his approval. He rose from the armchair in which he had been sitting and walked swiftly to his desk.

“Do you mind waiting a minute? I want to write a cable to our ambassador in Washington embodying your suggestion. I like to do things as soon as I get the idea. If I wait till after you are gone, there will be somebody else coming in. It will only take a minute to do it now.” He wrote the cable, handed it to a swiftly summoned messenger, and continued the conversation. Again I had the flattering sense of sitting in on the process of government. “Do it now.” “Open diplomacy openly

arrived at.” These two American slogans characterize Del Vayo.

In contrast to the easy, practical manner of Del Vayo, the head of the Catalonian government, Luis Companys, is tense, high-strung, something of a mystic. Entrance to him was through many arches and colonnades of the most beautiful old monastery I have ever seen. One secretary passed me to the next; I was conducted ceremoniously over an ancient stone bridge past a carved stone bench where two guards sat in picturesque red and black. Thus to the silence of a soft, velvet-carpeted room and a slight man with tense nerves and inspired eyes.

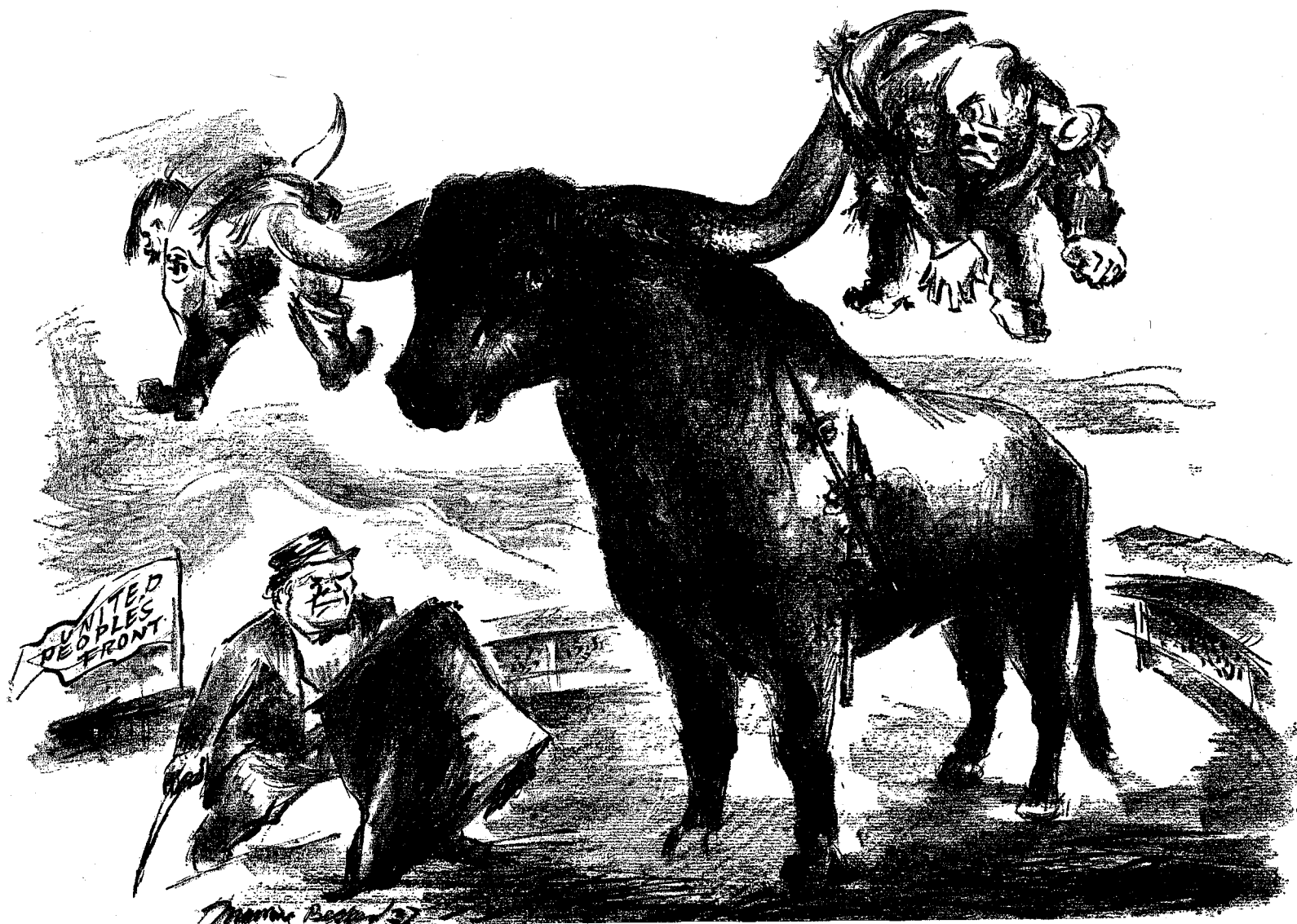
“No formal interview, please. No notes. He is too tired for that. He is leaving early tomorrow for a few days in a fishing village to catch up on his work.” Thus the secretary.

To Companys, Left Republican in politics, ardently Catalonian, falls the complicated task of reconciling the various tendencies of the people’s front in Barcelona, the Anarchists, Communists, Republicans. His is also the task of inducing this passionately nationalist folk to fight on behalf of their ancient enemy, Madrid. He demands order, discipline from a people who for two generations have resolutely hated the state on two counts, first as Catalonians and second as Anarchists. He is the one man around whom they all rally; he is deeply and passionately loved by masses.

He uses strong, vivid words. “We are fervent believers in democracy,” he told me with passion. He expressed tremendous admiration for Roosevelt. He was cold to the idea that Barcelona might be undergoing a social revolution. “Social change, yes, deep social changes; but through democracy, not through violence.” But the most revealing moment came when I asked him about the churches. Barcelona, of course, was the center of the anti-clerical fight, the reputed “Red City” where more than anywhere else there was destruction of church property.

Companys gave at first the expected answers, pointing out that the Spanish church had fought against the people, that the fascist rebels had systematically used the churches as depositories of arms and munitions for their revolt, and had later used rifles and machine guns from church buildings and monasteries against the government forces. It was no wonder, he said, that the people had felt a passionate bitterness, which had led to considerable destruction of church property. Then he added with deep feeling the words which gave me a key to his character.

“We are not against the religious instinct



MADRID!

Maurice Becker

nor against any form of its expression in any cult. When this passionate bitterness at the traitorous clergy dies down. . . . We are *men!* And in all men's hearts is a yearning towards the infinite." It was said with terrific sincerity, with deep, vibrant passion. Said thus, so amazingly in the halls of government, it made evident that the very head of government—in Red, Anarchist, church-destroying Barcelona—is a fervently religious man.

Utterly different from either the briskly efficient Del Vayo or the idealist mystic Companys is Dolores Ibarruri, Communist deputy from Asturias, daughter, wife, and mother of miners. The keynote of her nature is a deep, passionate love for human beings, ordinary human beings, comrades of the working class. It is the sincerity and depth of this passion which has made her a great leader, more worshipped by wide masses than perhaps any other person in Spain. It is this that has given her the name "La Passionaria," this passionate love for human beings combined with the equally passionate conviction that the cause of workers must triumph.

La Passionaria is not intellectual; she does not feel at ease with intellectuals; she tolerates them if they are useful to the people, but she never really likes them. Her affection pours forth rather to the girl interpreter assisting in

her interviews, to the messenger boy arriving from some workers' meeting, to the two youths who have just brought in a collection of money for medical supplies, which they check over carefully with her, to all the many thousands of obscure folk who do humdrum work for the cause of the workers. Sometimes it is an actual gesture of affection: she drops her arm around the girl stenographer's shoulders, notes tenderly that she is tired. Sometimes it is only an intonation of welcome in her voice which makes a pale, wounded youth bringing word from some front feel that he has come suddenly home to his own mother. Whether by gesture or tone, she diffuses about her a widening atmosphere of deeply concerned love—love for plain, ordinary people.

One phrase springs to my mind from the long talks I had with her, a phrase of passionate indignation over the bombing of Madrid. In spite of her long experience of the brutalities of fascist oppression—an experience which dates back through the years of miners' struggles in Asturias—she cannot take for granted the bombing of hospitals, of women and children. "We will never bomb an open city," she declared with energy and deep feeling. "For we are human beings, not assassins. The wives and children of our enemies are not guilty of their many crimes against us."

I pass now to Juan Garcia Oliver, the Anarchist minister of justice—what a job for an Anarchist!—one of the gentlest beings I met in Spain. Sitting in the palace which not long since belonged to the Marquis of Malferit: "Where is the Marquis now? . . . I don't know," he said with a wave of his hand. We discussed organization, discipline, excesses committed by Anarchists. "Not only by Anarchists," he gently reminded me, "but by all kinds of angry, outraged people. There are such in all parties—born of the evil past."

He agreed that "the small proprietor must be respected"; this is the present slogan everywhere heard in Spain in the effort to strengthen the bond between small enterprisers and the working class. He strongly affirmed that the unity of the people's front is no temporary measure, but undertaken seriously and for a long future. "If today we need the unity of these many different parties and classes to beat fascism, we shall need an equal unity tomorrow to rebuild war-ruined Spain. It would be suicide for Spain and a bad lesson for all the world if after a victory won by mutual struggle and suffering, one party or one group made itself master."

Oliver's real passion is for prison reform: this explains his post as minister of justice. Fourteen years of his own life have been spent

in prison, the rest as a professional agitator, supporting himself precariously by work in textile mills or as a waiter in restaurants. His voice thrills with enthusiasm as he describes his vision of a "prison city—which won't be really a prison, but a university of reeducation . . . better, bigger than the Russians have done at Bolshevo. A whole city where the men displaced by the old social order will have a life more normal than they have ever known."

"I have lived many years in prison among those called criminals," he said. "Never yet have I seen a millionaire jailed for theft, or a scientist for murder. The criminals are the men who had no chance, the men displaced. They must be given a place, not a bad place but a good place. They must have a chance to marry and have a family. They must have normal life." The Anarchist minister of justice closed our talk with the "need of building up the 'family sense' of the one-time criminal."

Many other portraits might be drawn from the Spanish gallery: the vivid young peasant organizer Julio Mateu, who discussed seed potatoes, orange crops, farm credits, and begged me to get him material on Soviet collectivization; the minister of fine arts, Jose Renau, himself as beautiful in middle age as a finely drawn painting. But I cannot close the gallery without mentioning two foreigners who have made themselves one in life and death with the Spanish people: André Malraux and Ralph Fox.

It was while I was desperately hunting a room in crowded Valencia that I turned despondently away from the desk at Hotel Victoria to encounter a tall, military form in a long, black rainproof slicker with a vaguely familiar face. "You don't know me," he smiled, and as I still hesitated, he snatched the transforming military cap from the long brown lock that curled aslant his high forehead. And I shouted: "André Malraux!"

Famous writer now turned aviator, Malraux leads an international air squadron in daily and sometimes twice daily flights. I visited his squadron in a requisitioned chateau, set in a California landscape: orange trees, low adobe buildings, backdrop of mountains. He pointed out the nationality of its members: "French, Belgian, Czech, Italian," and their varying politics: "Communist, Socialist, Communist, Anarchist."

That day his chief pride was a small photograph on which he showed me two small black dots in the midst of a gray mass of buildings—foreshortened buildings, seen very distantly from the air. The plane which he commanded personally had bombed Teruel that morning, two lucky simultaneous shots falling on the general staff headquarters of the fascists and on their near-by railway junction. The photo showed the moment of the double explosion.

"Amazingly lucky that the photographer should have synchronized so exactly with the bombing. Such a good picture," he remarked enthusiastically, passing over completely the personal danger involved in the conflict.

Later he said: "The most moving moment in our squadron is when a plane brings in

wounded. It approaches; we run out to hail its success. We do not know that any have been injured; this is not known until it lands. Then the door opens and they bring out dead or wounded comrades. This moment, not the moment of battle, is the most dreaded."

Last of all, Ralph Fox, British writer, most poignant of all my Spanish memories. Most poignant even before I knew his fate. In the coffee-room of the Grand Hotel they surrounded me—scores of English-speaking boys of the International Brigade. Railwayman from Vancouver, trade-union organizer from Australia, bus-driver from London, dark-eyed Kentuckian. Several writers more or less well known to British and American readers.

The conversation ranged with a high degree of intelligence from the strike at Hearst's Seattle *Post-Intelligencer* to the recent meeting of the League of Nations. Never in any land in any company have I found such a combination of political intelligence with militant energy. And all of them said: "You must see Ralph Fox. He's political commissar of our battalion. He can tell you everything."

It was the first time I had met him. Young, quiet, eager, with the clear eyes of a man whose path is surer than his own life. All his fervor was veiled by a decent British reticence; all his enthusiasm disciplined to conscientious choices. Every word and act in that whole evening was distilled essence of careful, intelligent comradeship. When I saw him off, entraining for the front next morning, he seemed a dear comrade I had always known.

He spent that last evening sending off messages, writing letters on the café table to people who loved him in many lands. He said to me: "When you get to New York, won't you call up Donald Brace and tell him I'm sorry not to send him that book on Mongolia

that they gave me an advance for? But you see I really had to go to Spain instead. I'll do them a book later if I come through this."

He urged me: "Try to dispel the idea that our International Brigade is a foreign legion of mercenary adventurers, or on the other hand a Communist army. It is a real People's Front army, for all the world. We want only genuine anti-fascists, preferably with military experience. No drunks or adventurers need apply. Such folks are sent back before they get here."

He added: "If they can't send men, let them send materials. Ground sheets, the rubber kind, not canvas; tea, any strong kind; cigarettes, any kind but French. Oh, yes, and one pipe for McKenzie," he added with a grin across the table at the latter, "who refuses to smoke cigarettes. Books, light literature, detective stories, fiction, good biographies, stuff to read in English. Woolen socks, knit gloves, and scarfs. And pocket flashlights by the thousand, strong leath straps, and maybe a dozen fifes or flutes." Thus methodically he listed things, asking in the end for "ten prismatic compasses."

Every moment was filled with this careful, unhurried planning; every motion was spent on the good of the brigade, or on checking off, thoroughly, conscientiously, obligations to distant friends. Only once did he mention the chances of battle, and this was incidental to his argument that the soldiers' wage of thirty cents a day with a dollar when in the lines was quite enough. . . . "You can't spend any money at the front, and so you come back with ten or fifteen dollars and only a day or so to blow it all in. For nobody would be foolish enough to go back to the lines with any money." It was so casually elusive, so British, that allusion to the death which met him only a week after we had said goodbye.



And still they come!

Dan Rico

Last Dispatch

A leading Cuban anti-fascist, who was a New Masses correspondent in Spain, records some impressions of the struggle in which he died

By Pablo de la Torriente-Brau

WE PRINT herewith the last dispatch sent us by Pablo de la Torriente-Brau, who had hardly begun in earnest his work as NEW MASSES correspondent in Spain before he decided that functioning as a writer there (his original purpose) was not enough; he must, he felt, join the fighting forces. This he did, and still found time to send us an occasional dispatch. The last published was called "Polemic in the Trenches," which appeared in our issue of December 8. Soon thereafter came the news that he had met his death on the Pozuela de Alarcon front, where he was assigned as political commissar of the Peasant Battalion.

The Puerto Rican poet, J. Enamorado Cuesta, who was a comrade-in-arms of de la Torriente in Spain, writes of him, in part, as follows: "Pablo de la Torriente-Brau started his revolutionary career long before he reached Spain. He had already been wounded in his native Cuba by Machado's gangster police; at that time he was held for more than two years in the fearful Havana fortress dungeons.

"When he came to Madrid I had been there some nine months. La Montaña, Conde Duque, and other military barracks had been gallantly stormed and taken by the Madrid workers. We thought that the republic had won the 'war' and that there was nothing left to do but court-martial the rebel generals. But Pablo was not a green revolutionist. He knew from experience that Reaction is hard to beat, in Spain as in Cuba, because here, as there, it had the support of foreign imperialist interests.

"Pablo would rather have stayed at the front as a war correspondent, or rather, as a simple militiaman. But we needed him back in Madrid. From the broadcasting station on top of the Palace of Communications, and from a new one set up by the Communist Party on Calle Serrano, we spoke two or three times a week to our American brothers and to the Spanish-American peoples in general. Pablo did his job there and did it well. I found myself, knapsack on my back, compelled to leave Madrid by special circumstances. I did not see him again. Later we heard rumors of his death. For two weeks we lived in hope that it was not true. Then I learned that he had decided that the pen was too feeble a weapon, and had changed it for a rifle. The name of Pablo is a banner to the people of Cuba and all Spanish America."—THE EDITORS.

HERE goes another letter. The cannon bark louder than ever. It seems that our batteries have been increased considerably and that they have orders to do a little destructive work. There is plenty of booming from the other side as well. I have just arrived from Pozuelo de Alarcon, the tiny town with the twisted and climbing streets, white houses, with blue mosaic bases jutting from their thick brick walls. Until last night the battalion was there, and now when I managed to rejoin it they have transferred us to Alcala de Henares, the city where Cervantes was born. At this rate I will soon have covered half of Spain.

The other day an insolent squadron of fifteen Italian tri-motors, accompanied by pursuit planes, flew over Madrid early in the day and unloaded in a brutal, pitiless manner.



Bertrand Zadig

Pablo de la Torriente-Brau

These dogs are murdering more women and children in Madrid than men on the front. In the crowded workers' neighborhood, Cuatro Caminos, the bombs smashed street cars full of people. It was an especially hard day at several points along the Madrid front. The Frenchmen's Bridge, where the enemy started a desperate attack, had to be blown up. Their tactic hasn't changed, and as a matter of fact it cannot very well be changed. No other road is open to them but to capture Madrid, and they won't be able to do that. Despite the deficiencies of our infant military apparatus, despite a harmful inactivity on other fronts at a moment when there should be greater pressure from our forces, they won't enter. Moreover, they may soon have to flee. Our aviation is wrecking their bases and their planes on a large scale. But they always restore these; their planes fly directly from Germany and Italy, traveling over France by night. If France did as much as the fascists of Europe, the war would soon be over. The indebtedness of the Spanish fascists to Germany and Italy is growing alarmingly. It may become so huge that there will be no solution but an international war. How the artillery is thundering! It's worth listening to, if only once in a lifetime. It's like a tempest of thunder and lightning in the mountains of Oriente in Cuba. Their aviation, which has shown itself to be inferior to ours in close fighting, does not tire of acts of vandalism which defy description. Last night, after a thrilling beating which they had received dur-

ing the afternoon from our machines, their planes appeared and threw incendiary bombs over the city. In the blackness of the night, there arose over the horizon out towards the Casa de Campo the glare of the fire they had caused. A hospital was also bombarded. Such are the methods of their desperation. Every time I feel their cannon closer to Madrid I fancy ours closer to Seville and Burgos. I suppose that the international press has mentioned something about their most recent bestiality. Over Madrid they dropped by parachute a box containing the horribly cut-up body of one of our aviators who had fallen behind their lines. Not even the cannibal tribes would do this—they are not exhibitionists of barbarism. On our side, General Miaja, head of the defense junta, has just issued an order that the lives of all fascist aviators who fall over Madrid be respected.

At dawn yesterday an intense cannonading took place. In the neighborhood of Abascal and Quevedo streets, the smoke and crash of falling buildings filled the air. Families evacuated their homes, weeping, dragging their children along and leaving the dead behind. But not far from the spot, hundreds of men were engaged in military drill, preparing to leave for the front. I went to the near-by temporary headquarters of the International Red Aid which the cannonading over the Montaña barracks had forced out of its old home. I went to see how things were getting on around there and incidentally to see whether there was any news from you. (By the way, now that I am "authority" around here, when you write to me, do so adding the words "Comisario de Guerra.") At the International Red Aid there were, as always, hundreds of women and children refugees who had fled from the cannonading, and many waiting around, resting on the mountains of clothing for a chance to be sent to Barcelona and Valencia. The kids leave here in large buses, singing, joyful, waving their little red flags. It doesn't occur to one that many of them are or will be orphans. It doesn't occur to one because the revolution is mother to all; she will give birth, with more blood and pain than any mother, to a new people. I think with deep joy of what this country will be like afterward. It excites me. Spain will be marvelous. The harder and more cruel the war, the greater and more quickly will all of that come about. Yesterday, by the way, I felt another of war's emotions: that of being in Madrid as just another militiaman. The feeling of "coming to Madrid" to forget all, to think not even of myself, as come the men

from the front who look forward to the chance of being here a few hours, of seeing the sparkling eyes of the women and drinking in the taverns among carefree friends. A bit of ruddy wine which glows like the lanterns in the red-light district, and mugs of beer, brown and foamy, like the German sweethearts of some of the members of the International Brigade. And then we went, a group of comrades, to the Laurel Inn. Having drunk marquis wine in quantities, we ate varied dishes, rare things which we had not seen for three months. There was old wine. There were women with shining, black hair and white smiles, mysterious eyes like ancient stones, and soft, white hands. But who thinks of women now? I tell you, though, living is a beautiful thing. And the wine of Spain enlivens one's fancy without making you drunk. At least it doesn't make me drunk.

From there I went to see a bit of destruction and a bit of another red object—blood. Near the Plaza de España there was a dead horse. Some children, with the carelessness of a people playing with life and death with the same detachment as if it were gambling in the lottery, were talking about the war. One said, "You have to watch out. We were there and all of a sudden, ssshhii! . . . Lucky we threw ourselves on the ground." I kept walking along, and suddenly it was I who had to drop to the ground. How quickly I've learned to judge distance and danger by sound. Bits of rock and shell sprayed against a wall I was passing. That neighborhood has been severely punished, and still there are those—heroes or imbeciles or needy ones—who inhabit it. It seems as if the clamor of our batteries protects them. I passed a house half smashed by an air bomb, which had also torn from its roots a small tree lying near by. Then I ran into Francisco Sánchez, a comrade from La Tribuna, the people's theater. With some satisfaction he told me, "Two of our fellows have died on the front and two have been wounded." He gave me news about the Frenchmen's Bridge, where the fighting by that time had eased somewhat. It was already very late and I had to return because it was already time for "Campesino" [the "Peasant," commander of Pablo's battalion] to be back at our headquarters. At that time of day, the sound of the machine guns gets to be like that of thick soup boiling and bubbling in some immense caldron.

One doesn't feel in war. Last night I was returning with "Campesino" in the car and I held the diary of a deserter, just executed. We joked, in the most natural manner, about how his corpse would be cold under the inclement night and the frozen interminable drizzle.

I was once a man with feelings and I will become one again. The other night, while a problem was being debated, Lopez, Pepe Galan's aide, turned on the car's radio. We were in the middle of a silent battlefield, near the enemy. They were playing one of the most sensitive Chopin ballads, which I had often heard in quite another setting, the con-



Anton Refregier

cert-hall. While I strained to hear sounds of the enemy nearby, I remembered with a certain measure of nostalgia the time when music had other horizons for me than the hymn of revolution, unharmoniously intoned by companies on march, raucous, intense.

As I thought of other times while the Chopin ballad played, Lopez said to me: "You like this, don't you?" I remember his words, because, the following night, along the same road, he disappeared, probably forever. Probably one of their surprise detachments, in a swift action, captured him together with his traveling companions. He was a jolly fellow, extremely clever. Everyone liked him, but now he is forgotten, at least until the war is over. It's three days now since he was lost. During this time I have been simultaneously in and out of Madrid. "Campesino" has received instructions to reorganize his battalion, decimated by the fighting at Pozuelo and Aravaca, and to create an additional one as well. Alcala de Henares is to serve as his organizing center. We have our headquarters in the Convent of Las Clares. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedro was born and lived in Alcala de Henares. I have not had the time to visit his home. From our auto, I have seen that it is an ancient town with that simple dignity typical of Castile. Large buildings of old brick; elegant church towers and convents; a peaceful silence in the streets. It also has its plaza for band concerts, its original fiestas, and numerous artistic and historical treasures. They say, too, that its almonds are famous. And I can't tell you anything more of Alcala de Henares. Some day I'll know it better.

Today has begun badly for me. They have told me that Candon, the other Cuban Com-

mandant, has died. How happy he was to tell me the other day, "I'm going to lead the attack." Let's hope it is not true. He wanted me to go with him. As to the general atmosphere, it seems unchanged. The defense junta has turned out to be a very efficient organism for the time and circumstances in which it was created. There's more unity and strictness in things. The enemy's so-called "Fifth Column" [fascists who remained hidden in Madrid and conducted night raids—Ed.] has seen its possibilities for action shrink because of the measures taken, and the popular morale is as high as ever. On the whole, the press has recently maintained the vibrant tone which the moment demands. The newspapers have stopped their campaign against the transfer of the government to Valencia. It should be said that this measure was wholly correct and should even have been taken at an earlier date. Of course, there were individuals who, on their own, took the occasion to "transfer" themselves personally. But no one is to blame for that, and already each organization has taken appropriate measures against this. Many will never be able to return to Madrid, unless as cowards they have lost all sense of shame, something which is possible after all. But then again we have the case of Don Ramon Menendez Pidal, who was given permission by the Ministry of Public Instruction to leave for Cuba for a lecture series a month ago, and has refused to leave Madrid while the present situation persists. He is a man of learning, a cordial and simple person to whom the crashing of shells can hardly be agreeable, but here he remains with us. Well, I leave off here. I will write you from the land of Cervantes.

Will Spain Repeat Ethiopia?

The foreign editor of "L'Humanite" discusses the international implications of the Spanish struggle

By Paul Nizan

AFTER Italy had conquered Ethiopia, an explanation was forthcoming from some foreign offices that this was the last time such an aggression could meet with success, for now the Powers were in a position to block other adventurers. No one imagined that the test would come so soon.

Little time passed after July 18 before it was known that the Spanish rebellion was no general's *pronunciamento*, but rather a new technique in international aggression. This was a fascist uprising, prepared from abroad by patient work of Nazi agents, with immediate support from Germany and Italy. The stakes in the struggle were Hitler's conquest of the raw materials of Spain and Morocco, and Mussolini's conquest of strategic positions in the Mediterranean.

For three months, the democratic powers strove to shut their eyes to what was happening, strove to convince themselves that this was merely a Spanish civil war. The governments of France and Great Britain hoped to convince their peoples of this as well. All they needed was a cooperative attitude by the fascist Powers, but this was too much to ask. The liberal states proposed neutrality in the form of the non-intervention pact of August 8, which France undertook to put into immediate effect in order to "rouse the sense of honor" of the fascist governments. Everybody signed, everybody met in London under the austere chairmanship of the Britisher, Lord Plymouth.

While the diplomats talked on and on in London, German and Italian airplanes, war materials, tank and air-raid specialists poured into Franco's camp. The diplomats still shut their eyes, until the Soviet Union denounced the tragic farce of "non-intervention" and undertook to support the Spanish republicans. At the same time a great movement was born in Europe when worker volunteers enlisted in the republican militia. It must be said that, despite the heroism of the republican fighters, Franco would unquestionably have won out if the international columns and Soviet aid had not equaled the efforts of the fascist powers.

When fascist intervention became too glaring for the diplomats to keep their eyes closed any longer, too glaring for them to continue their little game of tiddle-de-winks—when the arrival in Spain of Italian and German "volunteers" reached such a point that it could no longer be concealed—new steps were undertaken. At the beginning of December, a proposal was made to strengthen the control of neutrality, and, on December 26, France and Great Britain decided to send a strong protest

to Lisbon, Rome, and Berlin. The fascist foreign offices treated this move with extraordinary scorn, as if they had been assured in advance that the democratic states were capable of talking, but not of acting.

Hitler was vacationing—nothing could be done until he returned to Berlin. The Quai d'Orsay and London Foreign Office circulated optimistic rumors: the split between the Nazi extremists and the economic experts allied to the Reichswehr was growing sharper; Hitler was on the point of retreating; Hitler was finally to return to the community of nations. The various ministers of foreign affairs prepared to slaughter the fatted calf for the return of the Prodigal Son. It was even mooted about that London had astutely torn Rome away from Berlin and that Mussolini was about to drop the Spanish affair. There were several days of pleasant calm, such as invalids experience. But Hitler, in truth, did not move an inch.

Meanwhile, Nazi Foreign Minister von Neurath told the ambassadors that Hitler was

ready to sign anything, provided he was granted authorization to intervene against the eventual "bolshevization" of Spain. This was all-inclusive, for Berlin charges, for instance, that the French People's Front government is a government "in the tow of Moscow."

These declarations received immediate clarification by the piratical acts of the German cruisers *Koenigsberg* and *Admiral Scheer* on the Basque coast, as well as through the Nazi provocations at sea, obviously designed to lead to a state of war between the Reich and the Valencia government. Meanwhile, the Reichswehr divisions which had landed in Spain launched a mass attack on the Madrid front. At the same time—the very day that Rome signed the "gentlemen's agreement" with London, under conditions such as to lead one to ask whether these "gentlemen" were not "gentlemen of fortune"—4000 Italian soldiers landed at Cadiz, and it was learned several days later that they had been preceded by 6000 men.

The situation is frightfully clear: Rome



Aaron Sopher

"Naturally Roosevelt distrusts the Spanish People's Front government. As soon as it was voted in, it actually began living up to its election promises."

and Berlin have undertaken to conquer Spain under cover of defending Europe against "bolshivism." They will do whatever is needed for their success if London and Paris do not interfere. They think everything could be arranged easily. London is very willing to come to an accord with the fascist states to prevent the birth of a proletarian state in Spain. In France, in the very circles about M. Delbos, the Radical-Socialist Minister of Foreign Affairs, the high officials of the Quai d'Orsay long for the victory of the fascists. The *Temps* explains that the defense against "bolshivism" must precede everything.

There can be no doubt that the ideological "crusade" of Rome and Berlin against the revolution is finding enough accomplices in France and England to make its success possible. But, since this "crusade" shields the imperialist ambitions of Italy and Germany, an accord is not so easy. It is certain that the victory of Franco would have several disquieting results: first, German control of the raw materials of Spain, i.e., the Rio Tinto copper ore, the mines of Tharsis, and the mineral deposits of Spanish Morocco; secondly, the establishment of German forces at Ceuta and also at the Canary Islands; thirdly, the control of Italy over the Balearics. In other words, Britain would face a threat to its lines of communication with its eastern Empire, and France would face German control over its lines of communication to North Africa, German threats to Morocco, and several Reichswehr divisions on the Pyrenees frontier. This eventually would mean the immobilization of two or three hundred thousand men in the Southwest of France for the defense of a frontier which hitherto did not exist from the military point of view.

These are stakes worth playing for. The question which comes up is this: will France and Great Britain understand that their national interests and their national security are linked to the maintenance in Spain of a democratic government? And in this case, will we see the strengthening of the solidarity of the democratic Powers to maintain peace against the fascist attempts at conquest?

Or will the French and the British bourgeoisie, placing class solidarity ahead of national interest, abandon all defense of democracy to collaborate with the Reich and Italy for the defeat of the Spanish republic?

Rome is openly counting upon British complicity. In France, the bourgeois press is demanding that aid be sent to Franco, and a part of the "liberal" press advises the government to drop all interest in the outcome of the civil war in Spain.

That is why we must ask whether Spain will be a second Ethiopia. Such a situation would be one of extraordinary gravity, for the precedent which the fascist states are seeking to establish would have again borne fruit. Specifically, the Nazis would try the experiment again against Czechoslovakia, which is already threatened by definite preparations, notably the concentration of Nazi troops near its frontiers and by the secret treaty just con-

cluded between Germany and Austria. The new technique would be applied in the following way. A "domestic" uprising would break out in Czechoslovakia led by the German Sudetic Party headed by Konrad Henlein. This uprising would be supported at once by Berlin until Henlein's victory, and an *Anschluss* maneuver would attach Czechoslovakia to the Reich. Hitler would then be in a position to carry out his great task of the *Drang nach Osten*, i.e., of the conquest of the Soviet Ukraine.

This is the stake. Peace will not be saved by permitting Germany and Italy to triumph in Spain. Each fascist victory does not put war farther off, but brings war nearer. The

criminal leniency with Italy over Ethiopia cannot be repeated with impunity. It has been said that a victorious Italy would be a satisfied Italy, ready to enter the ranks of the orderly Powers, i.e., the powers friendly to the status quo, conservative like Great Britain and France. The expectations have been false, as the Spanish adventure has proven. Will the same lie be trotted out for Germany with the variation that Germany would no longer be dangerous if permitted to Nazify Spain?

Unfortunately, we can feel in the "democratic" countries the rising sentiment among the ruling classes that what is most important is the *international* solidarity of the bourgeoisie. This can finish everything. The essence of the Spanish events cannot be grasped if we do not see that the civil war is really not being waged between Spanish Reaction and the Spanish republic, but between the Spanish people and the workers who have rallied to their aid on one hand, and the international bourgeoisie on the other hand, led by its fascist advance guard.

Can we help thinking that the hour of the great decision is approaching?



"Heil, la España!"

J. Wuyt

THE second week of the widespread strike against General Motors opened on a note of violence, proceeded to mediation and a truce, and wound up with a complete double-cross by the corporation. For the rioting, which resulted in injuries to fourteen strikers, William S. Knudsen, executive vice-president of General Motors, expressed regret and declared, "We are not going to encourage violence." Company officials pointed out that their guards had "not raised a hand" against the strikers. But Mr. Knudsen's regular guards had no need to attack the strikers, because, according to Homer Martin, president of the United Automobile Workers, "thugs were being shipped from Decatur, Ill., to serve in Flint" and "got into action on the evening of the same day they arrived," assisted by Flint police, who, Martin said, "violated the law and their oath of office by engaging in a private enterprise with company-hired thugs." What immediately led to the riot was the turning off of the heat and hot water in the plants occupied by the sit-down strikers, the carrying of clubs by the company guards, removal of a ladder used by the strikers in entering and leaving the building, and the attempt to bar outsiders from bringing food into the plant (see story p. 25).

Newly-elected Governor Murphy sent 2000 National Guardsmen into Flint, the largest mobilization in the state, for an industrial situation, since the copper strike of 1913. At the same time, he refused to permit the troops to aid the sheriff in serving John Doe warrants on the strikers and succeeded in arranging a preliminary "peace conference" even while the strikers remained in the Flint and Detroit plants.

After an almost continuous eighteen-hour discussion, an armistice was reached. The strikers were to leave the plants before the following Monday, at which time conferences would begin for consideration of the union demands, including recognition of the U.A.W. as the sole bargaining agency for General Motors workers. In return for the withdrawal of the "sitdowners," Knudsen agreed not to resume production in any of the struck plants and not to remove machinery or dies for the purpose of starting production elsewhere. True to their word, union officials proceeded to evacuate the Cadillac and Fleetwood plants, in which their members had been stationed for nine days. To the tunes of "Solidarity Forever" and "Hinky Dinky Parlez-Vous" ("The boss is shaking at the knees, He's shaking in his B.V.D.'s. Hinky dinky parlez-vous"), the strikers paraded out of the factories, carrying banners calling for "Six Hours Work, Eight Hours Sleep, and Ten Hours Play" and "General Motors Today, Ford Tomorrow." The paraders were cheered in the streets, and Martin announced that of 100,000 membership application blanks printed two weeks ago, only 4000 were left.

BUT on at least three points, General Motors brazenly betrayed the terms of the armistice. Workers of the Cadillac plant



*Covering the events of the week
ending January 18*

turned up at union headquarters with telegrams notifying them to report for work on the morning the conferences were to begin, and advising them, announced Martin, that "if they could not get into the plant gates, to come through the administration building." From Anderson, Ind., came reports that 150 police and special deputies were tearing down pickets' shacks and warning that no picketing, however peaceful, would be allowed. And blandly ignoring the fact that recognition of the U.A.W. as the sole agent for collective bargaining was to be one of the principal points of discussion at the forthcoming conferences, Knudsen cordially agreed to "bargain" with the Flint Alliance, an obvious company organization designed to break the strike. Knudsen's flagrant breach of faith resulted in an immediate decision to keep sit-down strikers in the two Fisher Body plants in Flint, which had not yet been vacated. Whereupon Mr. Knudsen refused to proceed with the conferences as planned.

The Flint Alliance action led to the filing of a complaint with the La Follette committee investigating violations of civil liberties. The demand of G. E. Boysen, head of the Alliance, for a collective bargaining conference, wired Martin, "is either directly inspired by General Motors or has been handled through strike-breaking detective agencies which would profit by violence." Martin demanded a public inquiry "into the background and financing of the Flint Alliance and similar law-and-order leagues and of their connection with General Motors."

The La Follette committee gave no indication of what action, if any, it might take in connection with General Motors, but it made considerable headway in clearing up the case of Joseph S. Gelders, southern representative of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners. For his work in defending Jack Barton, a Communist who had been railroaded to a chain gang under a statute later declared unconstitutional, Gelders had been kidnaped and severely flogged. Corroborating his story before the committee, Sergeant J. W. McClung of the Alabama State Police testified that all efforts to indict the assailants of Gelders had failed because they were employees of the Tennessee Coal, Iron, & Railroad Company. "You know, Senator,

the T.C.I. owns fifteen-sixteenths of the country around there," he explained.

LIKE the U.A.W., striking East Coast seamen did not overlook Congress as a logical aid in their fight. Early in the week a delegation called on Senator Copeland to propose changes in the Copeland Maritime Act, particularly the elimination of the discharge book, which seamen have reason to believe will be used in the formation of black-lists. Their complaints, according to one reporter, "were not taken very seriously by Senator Copeland," but in another congressional quarter they produced immediate results. Representative Sirovich (D., N. Y.) introduced into the House a resolution calling for a six-month suspension of the so-called "fink book" provision, to give Congress time to study the protests of the seamen and make whatever changes it then thought necessary. The measure, Sirovich thought, might hasten a settlement in the maritime strike, which continued in full force despite shipowners' announcements of an "immediate end." To lend weight to their protest against the discharge book, some two thousand seamen from Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Norfolk, and other eastern ports converged on Washington to picket the Commerce Department building and to present their protest to the Maritime Commission and to cabinet secretaries Perkins and Roper.

After the frenzy with which Congress drove through its "neutrality" bill against Spanish democracy in the first week of the session, it calmed down perceptibly and seemed for the most part to be marking time, waiting for the President's inaugural address. Nevertheless, several important bills were introduced which will be heard from later in the session. Following a series of six transport airplane crashes which took a toll of 29 lives in a five-week period, Senator McCarran (D., Nev.) proposed a measure to strip the Commerce Department of its powers over air transport and turn them over to the Interstate Commerce Commission. The move was regarded even in conservative circles as a well-earned slap at Secretary Roper's notoriously inept collection of politicians.

Another measure which will create a stir before it is disposed of, was Senator Norris's proposal to curb the injunctive power of lower federal courts. With special reference to district court injunctions which have been frustrating the T.V.A., Norris declared: "Congress does not have to wait for a constitutional amendment to prevent legal delays from circumventing the will of the people, although I will join with advocates of an amendment to make sure that Congress has the power to deal with these important matters." Norris would have Congress create a special court to deal only with suits involving constitutionality of federal laws, with quick trial and quick appeal to the Supreme Court made possible. Other significant bills included the extension of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and four related credit agencies, and that hardy peren-

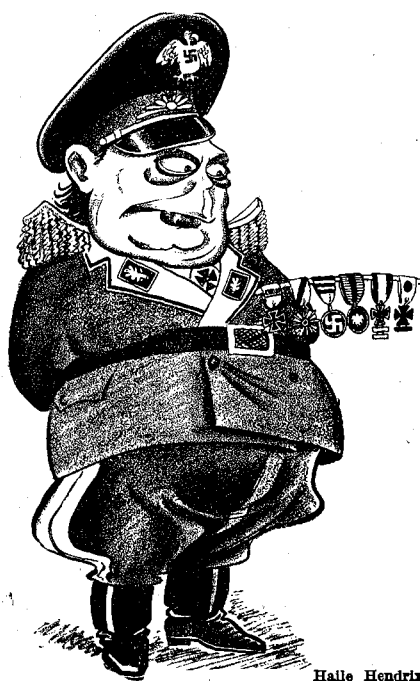
nial, the proposal to build a canal through Nicaragua, this time urged as a military measure.

IN the most significant legislative matter of the week, however, Congress was on the passive, rather than the active, end. This was President Roosevelt's elaborate plan for recasting the executive branch of the government. Dissatisfied with the present "antiquated" system, the President proposed these far-reaching changes: expansion of the White House staff to include six executive assistants to aid the President in administrative duties; strengthening and developing of the managerial agencies of the government, which would become "management arms of the Chief Executive"; extension of the merit system to cover practically all non-policy-determining posts, along with reorganization of the Civil Service Commission and increases in salary throughout the service; regrouping of the hundred or more agencies, administrations, authorities, and bureaus so as to include them, logically, in one of the cabinet departments, to which would be added a new Department of Social Welfare and a new Department of Public Works; and abolition of the post of Controller-General, with a restoration to the President of "complete responsibility for accounts and current transactions."

For two reasons it was regarded as improbable that anything like so drastic a change would be put into effect: first, it would rob Congress of practically all its patronage power, and second, it would go too far in the direction of centralized authority. To offset charges of autocratic ambition, Roosevelt declared that democracy would be threatened if "self-government broke down and was frittered away in bad management," but there could be no doubt that his plan would strengthen the office of President of the United States, already a more powerful political position than exists in any other democratic country of the world. Liberals in Congress were particularly incensed at the possible domination of such independent agencies as the Federal Trade Commission and the Interstate Commerce Commission, which for years have been reservoirs of mild liberalism even in the most tory administrations.

SIX months after the beginning of what Berlin and Rome had planned as a quick fascist overthrow of the People's Front government of Spain, General Hermann Wilhelm Goering, Hitler's paunchy lieutenant, crossed the Alps for an extended parley with Mussolini. The immediate occasion for the fascist conference was the evident inability of General Franco to break through the defenses of Madrid, the necessity of replying to a note from Great Britain demanding control of foreign volunteers in the Spanish conflict, and the aim of the two dictators to build an imperialist war bloc against the Soviet Union.

Inspired press reports let it be known that the Goering-Mussolini conference resulted in the following: (1) a decision to send more



Goering—Plotted further intervention

Italian and German troops, probably 100,000, into Spain, for a renewed offensive against the Spanish People's Front, in expectation of a quick fascist victory; (2) a four-power pact among Italy, Germany, France, and Great Britain to isolate the Soviet Union in European affairs and prepare the way for the anti-Soviet "crusade"; (3) intensified opposition to the Blum government in France in order to force the speedy fall of that government and its replacement by a pro-fascist regime; (4) nullification of the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance pact, end-product of the previous three objectives.

ALTHOUGH the Goering-Mussolini talks occupied the center of the diplomatic stage, developments in other key countries gave further point to their decisions. From Moscow came a reply to the British note in which the Soviet refused to become a partner to the fascist strategy of isolating and blockading the Spanish loyalists behind the non-intervention camouflage. "Even though the Soviet government does not practise the dispatch of volunteers," said the Soviet, with an eye cocked on Italian and German recruiting of troops for the Spanish fascists, "such measures are particularly premature if we take into consideration that the rebels up to now have never given any fundamental agreement to the establishment of any control, and that the governments supporting them have given no clear agreements, without reservations, either to the establishment of control or to the prohibition of transport troop detachments to Spain under the name of 'volunteers.'"

In Paris, the French Chamber of Deputies unanimously passed a government-sponsored measure to stop French volunteers to Spain on condition that all other interested governments do likewise. In another sphere, however, the Blum government continued its policy of trying to pacify the fascist war-mongers with concessions—this time by offering the Nazis a favorable trade agreement. The futility of this

policy was immediately shown when the influential *Boersen Zeitung*, in an inspired article signed by Karl Megerie, rejected all trade concessions involving "barter of Germany's freedom to rearm," and heaped abuse on France for having any such illusions.

The immediate concrete result of the Goering-Mussolini conversations was a strategically planned drive by a force of 30,000 fascist troops under Italian military experts against the southeastern coastal port of Malaga. Frustrated in their first attempt by a loyalist air attack, the fascists later in the week succeeded in landing a force near Estepona, farther south, which then became a taking-off point for a drive north against Malaga. Although Malaga has been in loyalist hands from the beginning of the war, its isolated position has made it difficult to reinforce, but military experts nevertheless discounted the chances of its being captured.

Inclement weather and fog made the Madrid front relatively quiet, although ground was gained by the loyalists in the University City area, and the position of the rebels in the Clinical Hospital was made untenable.

SETTLING down in his new haven in Mexico, Leon Trotsky, in characteristic fashion, proceeded to break his promise not to engage in politics or to weaken Mexican relations with friendly nations. To an assembly of reporters, Trotsky declared that the Soviet Union had "sabotaged" the Spanish struggle and prevented the Spanish workers from defeating fascism and seizing power. The reactionary press of Mexico splashed the interview on their front pages, proving once again that Trotskyite charges are grist for the fascist mill.

In the Far East, the Chinese Communist Party sent a four-point message to the Kuomintang and government leaders, appealing for a truce between Nanking and anti-Japanese forces in Shensi, and for a conference at Nanking between representatives of all Chinese groups, parties, and armies to discuss "national salvation" and resistance to Japan. No reply was made to this appeal, but an unstable compromise agreement was worked out providing that the anti-Japanese troops in Shensi would not be attacked if the Sian generals would agree to give nominal allegiance to the Nanking government. This compromise was regarded as a temporary setback to the pro-Japanese clique in the Chinese government which has been trying to force a civil conflict, but the whole issue will not be settled until the Kuomintang congress, February 15.

The Japanese Diet, about to convene, was faced with the question of whether or not to equip its country's ships with big guns when the American Navy Department announced that its two new 35,000-ton battleships would carry 16-inch guns unless Japan agreed to limit hers to 14 inches. In its effort to whip up a war scare against the United States naval program—the largest in American peace-time history—the Japanese press met a restraining influence in the fact that Nippon's retail prices are today 27.9 points above those of 1929.

An Embargo on Democracy

The recent special legislation on arms for Spain is seen as a departure from tradition

By Joseph R. Brodsky

INTERNATIONAL law clearly distinguishes between "neutrality" toward nations at war with one another and "neutrality" toward a legitimate government faced with a civil rebellion. Last year's Neutrality Act, still in force, and the recent special embargo on war materials to Spain have somewhat confused these two distinct questions in the public mind, a fact which is partly due to administration policy in deliberately bracketing both acts together. As a matter of fact, however, distinctly different issues are at stake in respect to the embargo resolution signed by the President on January 8 than in the previously passed general neutrality act.

There was a time when an American Secretary of State insisted on the right of the United States to purchase arms abroad in case of foreign aggression. "The right which it claims for itself, it cannot deny to others," Secretary Lansing of the Wilson administration declared. The neutrality act with reference to wars between nations has reversed this policy. War materials are now banned to all warring nations; and, presumably, the United States government will no longer be able to insist upon its right to buy war materials from neutral nations in case of aggression also.

But, and this is the significant point, the neutrality act had been interpreted by the State Department as specifically excepting "civil wars" from its scope of operation. A flurry of excitement was aroused in the press when the Spanish government tried to purchase arms here on the ground that there was a "hole" in the act. Nothing of the sort. The neutrality act excepted civil wars because that is well-established doctrine in international law. Civil wars have always been treated other than wars between nations. The administration press deliberately or ignorantly blurred this distinction in the propaganda barrage which hastened the embargo resolution through both houses of Congress.

According to traditional policy, we have been extremely careful not to give offense to friendly foreign powers faced with a rebellion. So long as a state of belligerency is not announced putting both the government and the insurgents on an equal diplomatic and legal footing, we have always permitted the government to buy war materials here and denied that right to the rebels. It has been pointed out again and again that "In time of insurrection there may be ample reason why a state of belligerency should not be recognized. . . . The recognition of belligerency would place the party recognized and the established state upon

the same plane as regards the rights of war. This might be of great advantage as regards the party desiring to overthrow . . . the established state. Such recognition might be a decided disadvantage to the established state." (*International War Situations*, Naval War College, 1912, p. 10.)

In the light of this policy, we have enacted statutes which, among other things, inflict punishments up to three years and fines up to \$10,000 on those who would use our territory as a base for enlistment against a friendly government, or who would organize military expeditions or arm vessels against a friendly government. These statutes are strictly unilateral; they do not provide similar punishments against friendly states that buy arms for use against rebels.

There have been cases when the U. S. Supreme Court leaned over backwards enforcing this policy in upholding the superior rights of governments dealing with rebellions. In a case in connection with the Cuban revolt against Spain, the Court ruled that despite "the traditional sympathy of our countrymen with a people who seem to be struggling for larger autonomy and greater freedom, the laws of the United States prohibit their citizens, as well as others being within and subject to their jurisdiction, from taking part in such disturbances adversely to such established governments."

This same doctrine was used with great effect by the United States government during

the Civil War of 1861-5. When Great Britain persisted in buying and selling goods and war materials to the South, the Lincoln administration charged that this constituted aid to the rebels, in violation of international law which permitted governments to deal only with governments in cases of rebellion. President Lincoln warned that southern debts to Great Britain would not be honored by the government after the war and threatened to declare war on the British unless all intercourse with the rebels ceased. The threat worked because the British knew they were skating on thin diplomatic ice.

It is established doctrine that treatment of established governments and rebels on the same plane is equivalent to a hostile act against the government involved. Hyde's standard *International Law* says that "where a parent government is seeking to subdue insurrection . . . and the insurgents claim a political nationality and belligerent rights which the parent government does not concede, a recognition by a foreign state of full belligerent rights, if not justified by necessity, is a gratuitous demonstration of moral support to the rebellion and of censure upon the parent government."

The justification for the embargo resolution which prohibited "arms shipments for use by either of the opposing forces in Spain" was not "necessity" involving threats to either our citizens or our commerce; the resolution was passed ostensibly to keep us out of the war. Furthermore, we have not backed up the embargo resolution by granting belligerent rights to the rebels. If we granted them such rights, they could search the seas and visit American ships for cargoes and contraband of war. This embargo resolution gives them no such right. In every respect but the right to buy arms, the rebels are still rebels in the official eyes of the United States government. But in this one crucial respect, we have put them on an equal plane with the established government.

This resolution is a legal monstrosity in yet another way.

Unlike the general Neutrality Act in respect to war between nations, this embargo is specifically limited to the Spanish struggle and no other. (The Neutrality Act reversed one general policy for another. But the embargo resolution has not reversed our general policy. It has merely reversed our general policy in this particular case in order to discriminate against the legitimate government of Spain.)

There is no reason to expect that the government will not revert to the general policy as followed, for example, in the case of the suc-



Linoleum cut by Sid Gotcliffe

cessful Brazilian revolt of 1930. On that occasion, President Hoover issued a proclamation forbidding all shipments of arms to the rebels, but he explicitly authorized such shipments to the government. The insurgents were sufficiently strong at this time to defeat the government within a few days of the proclamation. Nevertheless, the official justification for President Hoover's action was the "practice of mankind known as international

law" which, said the Secretary of State, entitled only the government to buy arms in cases of insurrection. Nothing in the embargo resolution prevents reversion to this precedent.

The conclusion is inescapable that the Roosevelt administration pushed through a resolution dealing only with the present Spanish struggle and not with the general policy, because the old policy may be found useful on other occasions. The old policy stacked the

diplomatic cards in favor of the established government. When the United States government again finds this desirable, it will be able again to penalize rebels.

It is a cruel commentary on President Roosevelt's speech in defense of democracy at the Buenos Aires Peace Conference that his first official act on war and peace after the Congress should be "a gratuitous demonstration of moral support to the [Spanish] rebellion and of censure upon the parent government" when it is the government which upholds democracy and the rebellion which would strangle it with fascism. The old policy was built up in an age when rebellions invariably sought to overthrow reactionary governments. The policy was a back-scratching affair which linked together the fate of all governments. The Spanish conflict does not, however, come within this designation. The legitimate government is here one dedicated to social progress under republican auspices, whereas the rebellion has united all the forces of reaction under the auspices of international fascism. (The reversal of policy in this specific case by the United States government constitutes assistance to fascism and comfort to the chief makers of war.)

Would the United States government do the same if it were a case of the Indian or Arabian masses in rebellion against the British government or the Libyan people against Italian fascism? Would the United States government treat both the imperialist governments and their colonial possessions on an equal footing and prohibit the sale of arms to both?

If peace is truly to be safeguarded by democracy, then we should not make an exception to a general rule when that exception is directed against Spanish democracy.



"I'll keep clear of all this."

Jacob Burck

Behind the Lines in Spain

The exigencies of civil war have spurred Spain in becoming "a republic of workers"

By Theodore Draper

AS the struggle in Spain passes its sixth month, the back-of-the-lines situation challenges in importance the actual front-line fighting. The longer the war, the more important an effective economy. Indeed, the military and social aspects of modern warfare are so intimately interdependent that they seem to merge into one vast and infinitely complicated whole. Mass armies requiring to be fed, clothed, and armed on a mass scale; hungry, homeless, and disorganized civilian populations; mechanized warfare demanding inexhaustible quantities of ammunition and armament of all sorts; fleets of trucks and other conveyances; complicated and costly systems of hospitalization and epidemic prevention—all these refinements of our civilization have contributed to make the politico-economic front as important as the combat front.

The initial advantage in coping with many of the most important problems of the war was with the rebels. Practically all of their most vital needs have streamed in from abroad, from Germany, Italy, and Portugal; the "neutrality" blockade penalized the legitimate government in its efforts to obtain the most elementary military equipment. The rebels took the initiative with more than 80 percent of the trained soldiers in the regular army on their side; the government was faced with the colossal task of organizing a people's army from raw recruits with an inadequate high command and bullets so scarce, time so precious that military training was an impossible luxury. The rebels fought as an experienced and disciplined unit under expert commanders; a large minority of the anti-fascist forces resisted discipline and a unified command on principle for a considerable period.

Tremendous as were these military obstacles, the economic problem of getting the factories back into operation and the fields harvested were only little less so. The very impact of the rebellion would have disorganized trade, industry, and agriculture under the best of circumstances. But, at least in respect to economy, the rebellion broke out under pretty nearly the worst. Big industry and the big estates were practically the monopoly of fascist sympathizers. Fascist supporters behind the government lines were thus in a peculiarly favorable position to sabotage production, especially during the first two months of the struggle. This may be considered the "normal" economic problem because indiscriminate fascist bombardment and shelling of cities made the situation immeasurably worse.

The guiding thread to the economic reforms of the last six months is sheer military neces-

sity. Another important consideration has been the necessity of wiping out the economic as well as the political roots of Spanish fascism. The present People's Front government has recognized the fundamental truth that fascism cannot be completely eliminated until its economic position has been thoroughly undermined. This economic position was based primarily on the semi-feudal economy of great landed estates worked by farm laborers or tenant farmers. It was bolstered up by native capitalists, like Juan March, who financed specifically fascist movements such as the Falange Española of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, now dead. It was the great mistake of the five previous years of the republic that the political thunder against fascism far exceeded the actual economic bite. The very exigencies of civil war have definitely changed all that.

A people that fights reaction with passion has a way of foreshortening history. What was previously not accomplished for decades is now done in days. John Reed hailed the magnificent spiritual resources released in the midst of the ten Russian days that shook the world. Similar resources and resourcefulness have been released in Spain these last six months.

Spain's basic evils are very old, very rotten. Though any permanent social progress depends wholly on military victory, a brief sketch of the accomplishments to date will indicate how great is the social progress which is staked on the outcome of this struggle.

The Land Question: This is the chief economic, and therefore political, problem. More than a majority of the Spanish people are directly dependent upon the land for daily bread. As everywhere else, the agrarian problem is one of division and ownership of the land. In twenty-seven out of fifty provinces registered in 1931, 2 percent of the people owned 67 percent of the land while 76.5 percent of the people owned 4.7 percent of the land. Grandees used to own vast estates as large as half a province. About one third of the cultivated land was under the tenant-farmer system. Sharecroppers and farm laborers worked at the lowest living standard in Europe. For these reasons and others, Spain has always been a relatively unproductive land with never more than 40 percent of the soil under cultivation. The special features of Spanish economic development were the continued existence of a feudal land tenure and, as



Fighting for Spanish Democracy

Painting by Abraham Harrison

a consequence, the retarded development of capitalist industry.

More has been accomplished in agrarian reform in the last six months than in the preceding five years of the republic, which is to say, in the whole history of Spain. Only partial figures are at hand, but these are sufficiently eloquent. From August 1933 to February 16, 1936 (i.e., from the election which put the reactionary Lerroux-Gil Robles coalition in power until the last election won by the People's Front), 410,662.5 acres were distributed to the landless peasants. From February 16, 1936, until July 17, 1936 (when the fascist rebellion broke out), 1,780,185 acres were distributed. From July 17, 1936, to September 15, 1936 (three months of war), 1,797,547.5 acres were distributed. Now, the People's Front government under Francisco Largo Caballero came into office September 4 last, and it is really from this date that most agrarian reform has gone forward under the Communist Minister of Agriculture, Vicente Uribe. In any event, there was more land reform in the first three months of the war than in the preceding six months. And there was more in those six months than in the preceding three years. If the same rate was maintained for the last three months (it was certainly much faster), a spectacular land reform has gone forward during the six months of the civil war.

The decrees announced and carried out by Minister Uribe are drastic and far-reaching. The fundamental decree confiscates without compensation the lands of all persons convicted of direct or indirect participation in the rebellion. It must be remembered that the backers of the rebellion were precisely the big landlords. The confiscated estates already reach into the thousands. Wherever confiscation is authorized, a commission, composed of the local council, local People's Front committee, and one delegate each from the trade unions of the farm laborers and associations of small landholders and tenant farmers, is appointed in each municipality or rural district to divide the land. The locality is empowered to decide whether the land is to be worked as a collective or in individual holdings. Cultivation of the land is placed in the hands of the farm laborers in the respective district.

The law declares that all confiscated lands belong to the nation; tenants, farm laborers,

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Badajoz to Dorset

Telephone wires cry in the wind
and make song there. I stand in the misty
night
and listen. Hear voices from a far distance;
hear sounds from further, outside the wires,
than ever inside. Hear sounds from Spain.
The mist muffles all but these; blankets per-
haps the reply—
But the wind plays the wires still, and the
wires cry.

VALENTINE ACKLAND.



Woodcut by Gus Bundy

and small farmers "are granted the use in perpetuity as long as they maintain the fertility by a rational agricultural exploitation corresponding to the parcel of farm cultivated by them." Most of the land is divided into small cultivations, defined as seventy-five acres of unirrigated land or twelve and a half acres of irrigated land and seven and one half acres of orchard. Rent and feudal dues have been abolished everywhere. On September 8, Uribe declared that "the whole land which used to be an object for exploitation will in the future be a means of work for all peasants and for all landowners."

Agrarian reform has gone farthest in Catalonia. One unfortunate tendency, especially in some regions of Levante, has been hasty and forced collectivization. The Soviet experience has shown that the road to collectivization is not a straight and easy one. It is dangerous to force peasants into collectives before the way has been thoroughly prepared through provisions of adequate machinery, education, and, above all, a strong and independent industry. There has been another tendency to "collectivize" through individual unions and localities without consideration for a national plan or pattern. In practice, this leads to economic decentralization. Because the chief task in Spain at the present moment is the transference of the land from the big landowners to the peasantry, Minister Uribe has warned against forcing small landholders into collectives against their will by arbitrary expropriation, as though exploited peasants were the same as the old grandees. Collectivization by choice is an altogether different matter from collectivization by force. The latter, at this stage, is an unmitigated evil.

The problem of increased cultivation is courageously being faced, and marked improvement has already been announced. In the case

of at least two provinces, Jaen and Ciudad Real, the cultivated area has increased by twenty-five percent over last year. The increase in cultivation is, of course, not disconnected with the division of the land.

The key to the land reform is the slogan: *The land is for the man who works it.*

INDUSTRY: Spanish capitalism developed late and very unevenly. Most big industry is owned by foreign capital. Spanish industry as such is predominantly small-scale. As in agriculture, the big capitalists almost always sided with the fascists, though there have been notable exceptions. The chief industrial region is Catalonia, and this accounts for the strength of labor organization there. The chief Spanish industries are the Catalan textile industry and the metal and mining industries in the Basque provinces and Andalusia. The backwardness of capitalism partly accounts for the strength of the anarchist movement. Long ago, Engels remarked that anarchism flourishes where capitalism is under-developed and small production predominates.

As pointed out before, government operation of factories has, in the first place, been a military problem and a military necessity. Factories owned by persons who directly or indirectly assisted the rebels have been confiscated and nationalized. Factories engaged in the manufacture of articles classified as war materials are under state supervision. Wherever factories were shut down either for inefficiency, sabotage, or following the early disorder, production has been taken over by the state. According to Michael Kolzov, of the Moscow *Pravda*, about 18,000 factories were taken over by the middle of October. Of these, 2500 were in Madrid and 3000 in Barcelona. The decree which most effectively separated the businesses which were to be controlled

from those which were not, simply stated that all factories which failed to open would be opened and operated by the state. Non-functioning factories in this crisis obviously threatened the stability of the republic.

These factories are operated by trade unions in collaboration with the government. Factory committees coöperate with a government representative. All nationalized factories operate under a National Council composed of representatives of all government ministries and all parties in the People's Front. Workers' committees also have official standing in the management of privately owned factories.

In defiance of reality, there has been an insistence in some circles upon piecemeal "socialization" by local groups of workers or scattered trade-union federations. This would put socialization on an exclusively local trade-union base rather than on a national government base in coöperation with the unions. The inevitable consequence of this policy is industrial decentralization and consequent industrial inefficiency. These tendencies were especially prominent in the early part of the war. There are those who even counterpose "socialization" against "nationalization" or, in effect, decentralization against centralization.

The businesses of the small and middle bourgeoisie, in the main faithful to the republic, have not been nationalized.

Those who would insist upon complete and immediate socialization of property must be prepared to face the political consequences of that fact. They would be disastrous at the present stage of the struggle. To expropriate the small business man is to split the People's Front. To split the People's Front is to create irreparable confusion and disunity precisely when the utmost unity among the broadest possible social base is necessary in the life-and-death struggle against fascism. Complete socialization would not only split away the middle class from the anti-fascist front, but it would create the danger of a split with the Anarchists, whose ideas of "libertarian communism" are not the social ideas of the Communists and Socialists. There is no point in complete "socialization" until you are ready for socialism—and the Anarchists are not. This is no time to split the working class on this issue. The key to the industrial reform is not socialization of an infantile kind, but the successful defense of the republic upon which the future of true socialism rests.

CONCLUSION: These reforms in land and industry were demanded by the situation created by the fascist revolt. For five years, the Spanish democratic and labor movements were altogether too lenient with their worst enemies. If drastic changes have at last been made, it may with truth be said that the forces of Reaction brought it upon themselves. These changes were long overdue.

From a political viewpoint, these reforms constitute an economic counter-offensive against the rebel landowners and capitalists. If the war is won, the material basis of fascism

will have been abolished. This is the guarantee of continued progress. There is no conflict between the confiscation of the feudal estates and the nationalization of the big industries and the democratic republic, apart from the fact that every state has taken similar action against traitors. The republican constitution of April 14, 1931, starts out by dedicating Spain as "a democratic republic of workers of all types." These reforms constitute a truly heroic effort to make good the promise of those words, hitherto largely neglected.

In the whole of Spain, from Catalonia to Badajoz, the big landowners performed no economic service whatever for their ground rent and feudal dues. From one third to two thirds of the crop of each peasant was their levy upon the land. The land reform of the last six months has wiped out these parasites. The land belongs to him who works it. And that is no more than the pledge of the 1931 constitution, which Communists or Anarchists had no hand in writing.

This "democratic republic of workers," now

in process of creation, is in at least one respect different from democracy as practised in the United States or Great Britain. In these latter countries, fascism, backed by the most powerful industrial and financial interests, is an ever-growing menace. In Spain, a victorious war will ratify the actions already taken to cut away that exploitation in land and industry which is the class support of fascism.

It is eloquent testimony to the extraordinary heed for the concrete requirements of the struggle for socialism *at each stage in its development* that these far-reaching economic changes have not endangered the political unity of the proletariat, the peasantry, and the anti-fascist middle class. Economic reform at the cost of political unity would ensure the military victory of the rebels and that would in turn nullify all reforms. But mere maintenance of the cruel economic status quo when it is the most exploited that is carrying the brunt of the struggle would be equally fatal to the "republic of workers."



John Mackey

"Ask General Mola how to say 'retreat' in German, Italian, and Moorish!"

Forging Catalonian Unity

Parties and trade unions of the Left are redoubling their strength by consolidation

By Ralph Bates

TO ONE who has been immersed in the practical problems of the resistance to the Spanish fascist rebellion, it seems that the stages of its development can be defined by two battles: Toledo, and the first massed attack on Madrid. I do not know whether history will decide that way. I only feel this with that part of my mind which senses the atmosphere of things in the temper of the people around me.

Toledo. I remember it as I first saw it, in coming over the harsh, turbulent land below Greto, at evening time. My companion said

it was like a solemn mass of the Holy Ghost, red and yellow and looming and still. I believe I replied that the whole thing might vanish as we gazed. That was in the old days of peace and books. Now I see Toledo as El Greco painted it, torture and pain are in the sky of my imagination; the city has lost its magic, its forms are purgatorial. It will always be this way, even when we have recaptured that city, because there the agony of civil war came near to being intolerable.

This is the drama which will not relinquish my mind. When the military rebels made

themselves fast in the Alcazar they took with them their women. But not only their women, but the wives and mothers of workers who were to become militia in the next few days. Can you imagine the anguish of debate? In the military committee rooms around the Alcazar wall upon which were posted photographs of our women within, in the cellars whence we eventually mined beneath that wall, day after day, the fierce debate, and the anguish of decision? If we mine the Alcazar—No! Feel it as a militia commander felt it. "If I order our Asturian miner comrades to mine this fortress I blow up my wife, my sister"—no—feel it more sharply: "If I order this, I blow up *your* sister, *your* wife, comrade militiaman."

The world knows what happened afterwards, when our men, wretchedly armed, poorly organized, were driven pell-mell from the city and the fascists marched in to slaughter our wounded as they lay in hospital. The intellectual temper of our people had begun to change even while we were being driven to the gates of Madrid. Indecision, disunity, began to disappear; we knew what we were fighting. We had few arms, but unity would make that good.

There is no need to flinch the truth. By our military and political disunity as much as by our lack of arms we were being defeated.

THAT disunity had been the hope of our enemies. From 1931 when the second republic began, we had been crippled by division. I have argued in *Lean Men* and *The Olive Field* that had the 1931 revolution gone down to the roots of society, the tragedy many of us foresaw would have been avoided. That could not be, however. About the vital land reforms there was no unity of opinion. Radicals, Radical Socialists, Socialists, and Communists could not agree in Madrid, while in Catalonia the Anarchists stood aloof and contemptuous of all problems of government.

The result was that even the moderate, ineffectual, and even reactionary land reform of 1932 did not receive the full support of the democratic forces. That land reform had the demerit of arousing the hatred and opposition of the great landowners and their allies, the higher hierarchy of the church and the military castes. Against this opposition it could not awaken the enthusiasm and support of a gratified peasantry and a confident working class, whether revolutionary or reformist. Nevertheless, when the February elections returned a government pledged to instrument the 1932 agrarian reform and possessed of the



Loyalist Defenders

Etching by Victor Szucs

power to do this, the feudal classes began to prepare the revolt which finally broke out in July. The magnificent irony of modern Spain is that while political insight and unity amongst progressive parties were not sufficiently strong to prevent that outbreak, the instinct towards unity at once drove all parties together in defense of a constitutional democracy. Yet, when the first crushing repulse to fascism had been delivered and the flush of excitement had passed, there was still sufficient indiscipline and disunity to prevent Spanish democracy preparing itself for the necessity of a long war against the Italian and German statecraft which had come openly to the front in Spain.

Already those days seem far off, yet I am continually being asked, "Is there any possibility that fighting may break out between the Anarchists and the Marxian parties?" The answer must be clear. There is not the remotest possibility.

It is not only because the F.A.I. and the C.N.T. (the Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist organizations) are strong in Catalonia that unity is particularly a Catalan problem. The civil war had given the Catalan people industrial problems of the first order. Upon the successful running of Catalan industry, military victory depends. The position was this: immediately after the rebel garrisons had been defeated in Barcelona, many of the factories were abandoned by their owners and directors or closed against the workers. The account books show clearly a foreknowledge that something was to take place. I give as one example the Trans-Mediterranean Shipping Co. On the Tuesday of that July week, heavy bank withdrawals were made; that the financier contrabandist Juan March, director and financial abettor of the rebellion, was one of the Trans-Mediterranean directors may account for this.

The dilemma was, either to run the factories ourselves with all the attendant political difficulty, or to idle upon the streets and lose the war. There was only one answer possible. The workers and almost without exception the technicians took over, under the Catalan government, all the abandoned factories.

POLITICAL PROBLEMS at once came to the forefront. I have myself witnessed factory meetings at which keen, even furious debates continued hour after hour over these two points: (a) the position of the middle class, the technicians, the small distributors, the agents, etc.; (b) the degree of equalitarianism to be observed in the factory, centralization, the status of property in its relation to the state, etc. This latter, of course, involved the whole dispute between anarchism and socialism.

At this point American students of politics must bear in mind the enormous importance of small property in Catalonia. Large factories exist, yet there is nothing like a real mass industry. In Sabadell, for instance, where I formerly lived, and which is the largest purely textile city in Spain, the principal factory employed only 600 workers, while the side-streets rattled with the looms



Death List

Etching by John Groth

and carding machines of small firms and house-industry workshops. This same condition is also to be found in agriculture. To antagonize the numerically powerful middle class would be fatal; this is no time for a halt in production.

The problem was primarily one for the executives of the four great mass organizations of Catalonia; the F.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation), and the C.N.T. (National Confederation of Labor) on the one hand and the United Socialist Party of Catalonia (P.S.V.C.) and the U.G.T. (General Workers' Union), its trade-union federation, on the other. An additional complication was the existence of parties outside of these great proletarian masses, parties such as the Estat Catalá, which aims principally at a Catalan autonomous state without an especially social viewpoint, and the Esquerra, with its liberal-radical outlook and its moderate separatism. If not sufficiently important to be profoundly disturbing, the Trotskyist P.O.U.M. (Workers' Party of Marxist Unity) was at least a source of considerable exasperation.

From long before the rising, the contention of P.O.U.M. has been that the social revolution must be made in Spain at once. Since the rising that demand has been intensified despite the tremendous danger, indeed certainty, of such a revolutionary attempt splitting the anti-fascist front. P.O.U.M., for instance, has demanded that the working class sever all mid-

dle-class alliances in the interests of revolution.

The necessity of organizing a war industry, I have said, has given the Catalan government and its supporting masses problems which inevitably have demanded solutions of a revolutionary nature. Therefore, until the F.A.I.-C.N.T. and the P.S.V.C.-U.G.T. had reached joint conclusions about both the immediate and eventual post-war structure of society, to commence a thorough-going social revolution would have meant disaster. The common sense of the people grasped this firmly. That, simply, was the rock upon which the Trotskyists wrecked themselves. From being an impressive enough party, or perhaps, one ought to say, publicity agency, they have dwindled to comparative unimportance, having cut themselves off from all mass contacts of an effective nature.

BEFORE I give any account of the October 22 treaty, between F.A.I.-C.N.T. and U.S.P.-U.G.T., it is necessary to describe the rise of the last two organizations. In the early summer of this year, the four Marxian and Socialist parties in Catalonia decided to unite. One of them, the Communist Party, possessed not more than 250 members. Others, such as the Socialist Party, had perhaps 2000. Today, the United Socialist Party of Catalonia (P.S.V.C.) counts over 30,000 members in Barcelona alone. On the industrial side the process has been even more striking. In

April of this year only some 40,000 workers were affiliated with the U.G.T., while aloof from both the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. were large numbers of independent unions and syndicates. After the outbreak, impelled by their respective inherent philosophies, unattached workers and unaffiliated syndicates rushed to join the C.N.T. and the U.G.T. Catalonia, it has been said, is almost wholly Anarchist. How untrue that is may be seen from this: the 40,000 strength of the U.G.T. in April had become a strength of 450,000 in the first week of December. Exactly how little influence the Trotskyist P.O.U.M. possesses can be estimated from these figures, or from a multitude of cases such as that of C.A.D.C.I., the shop assistants' and commercial dependents' union. At the meeting at which this powerful and militant union decided to affiliate to the U.G.T., only two Trotskyist speakers and a handful of votes could be found to oppose the resolution.

The forces signing the October 22 treaty, therefore, represent not only the entirety of the Catalan proletariat, but a very large part of the middle class, adhering to the U.G.T. That treaty was the first stroke of the death knell of fascism. There is no space here to detail all of its fifteen points, but briefly, every possible ground of contention between anarchism and socialism was covered. The function and status of state banks, the commissariats of foreign trade, and the status of large industrial property, were defined. The place of the syndicates in the productive and distributive system was fixed, also that of the coöperative societies. For instance, it was agreed that the coöperative societies must be given an important function in future society, provided always that the continued existence of the small trader be not prejudiced. That small farmers should be allowed to work their land in an individualistic manner, if they wished, was insisted upon by both Anarchists and Socialists, while infantile extremisms, such as had been proposed by irresponsible revolutionary groups, were forbidden.

THE dwindling influence of the P.O.U.M., as was inevitable, has produced confusion in its ranks. The right deviationist section, despite the tragic loss of Maurin, its leader, assassinated by the fascists in Galicia, has never been wholly acquiescent in the Trotskyist policy with which Nin has saddled it. During the first two weeks of December, negotiations continued between what P.O.U.M. was pleased to call the only surviving revolutionary parties of Europe. It is proposed to form yet another International, presumably to be centered in Barcelona and maintaining no contact with either Trotsky or the Communist International. Bear in mind that we in Spain are in the seventh month of a civil war against the invading armies of international fascism, keep in mind that we have succeeded in uniting the great masses of the Catalan workers around the standard of the October 22 treaty, and remember that the I.L.P. in England, the P.O.U.M. in Spain, and their groups in



Bombardment

Etching by Ralph Rabin

France totaled together do not represent as large a force as, say, the U.G.T. Metal Workers' Union, and the hazy irrationalism of P.O.U.M. becomes evident.

I do not want to discuss this problem at the political level, yet I must point out that for some time the P.O.U.M. organ *La Batalla* has been attacking the Soviet government. While three-quarters of a million people, including perhaps 150,000 members of the F.A.I.-C.N.T., demonstrated on the November 7 celebration of the Russian Revolution, while the food ship *Zyrynain* was welcomed by the overwhelming masses of Barcelona, in the same period when every party organ, the *Humanitat* of Esquerra, *Solidaridad Obrera* of the F.A.I.-C.N.T., *La Veu* of Estat Catalá, and the rest of the Catalan press applauded the conduct of the Soviet government, P.O.U.M. gasps through the dense mists of bad theory, and charges the Soviet government with desiring to dictate to the Spanish people how they shall conduct their fight against fascism. Worse, hoping to unnerve the F.A.I.-C.N.T., it states that the Soviet government is not only trying to sap revolutionary energy, but, greatest folly of all, P.O.U.M. makes mysterious charges that the Soviet government is engaged in sabotage on certain unnamed sectors of the war front. (See report from Barcelona in the *New York Times*, Sunday, January 3.) Meanwhile, the pro-fascist press of the world is also making the first two charges, so that P.O.U.M. has the satisfaction of finding some hearing, if not in Spain and among workers.

It seems impossible to satisfy P.O.U.M., for at one time its attack on the Soviet government was that it had betrayed Spanish democracy by observing the non-intervention pact. Now, when the Soviet government has declared that it will not be bound by that pact to any greater extent than other signatories,

P.O.U.M. declares that Russian sympathy and help is an interested and counter-revolutionary intervention. There may be some private system of Trotskyist logic which escapes a plain fellow such as myself. I am especially inclined to believe this when I read that with pleasant insouciance the new Fifth International not only proposes to win the civil war and make the social revolution in Spain, but proposes to supplant the "official" Marxist parties of the world, and also to sweep away the Soviet government from the Russian scene. (And then what, little men?)

The third charge, of Soviet sabotage, is always presented in a suitably vague manner, but there is no reason why I should conform to their practice.

P.O.U.M. refers to the Aragon front, which has been inactive for some time. That inactivity, however, obviously corresponds to the strategic plan summed up in the slogan, "All for Madrid." This slogan has been debated in military discussion since long before the Soviet government's repudiation of the non-intervention farce.

It is good to return from these fantastic lands to the sober territory of the struggle for working-class unity.

SINCE that resounding victory, the various mass parties have been drawing closer in an impressive way. During the last week of November, the Anarchist and Socialist youth movements of Catalonia pledged themselves to joint work; at Valencia, outside of Catalonia, the Socialist and Communist parties have decided to fuse, thus foreshadowing eventual merging of the great brother parties, the Socialist and Communist parties of Spain. Most striking of all, the Malaga U.G.T. and C.N.T. are now studying how the two federations can be amalgamated.

Antonio Sesé, general secretary of the Catalan U.G.T., has pointed out the route to be followed in an article in *Treball*, organ of the United Socialist Party: "Hard practical work, jointly undertaken, in the running of factories, etc., will pave the way for the now not-distant achievement, the uniting of the Spanish working class in one large federation of labor." This, I insist, and I speak as one who has been engaged not in political tasks but in practical organizing work, is the road to that unity which means military victory. Only in this way can the legitimate government of Spain be provided with a war industry. There can be no wastage of time and effort in seeking to adjust the demands of the vast majority of the Spanish working and progressive classes to the theories of groups unballasted by mass responsibilities.

The magnificent defense of Madrid, I say, is due in great measure to this concentration of the democratic masses. To prejudice this growing unity will be to lead us back from the courage, the sober ardor, and the calm determination we have won, back to the nightmare desperation and the futile if glorious heroism of the Toledo days. Spanish democracy will not turn back.

The Poison Pen

The activities of a certain Madrid correspondent show one way by which news becomes "fit to print"

By James Hawthorne

COURAGE, thorough knowledge of parties and causes, and a complete absence of reactionary prejudgments are some of the things required of a correspondent in Spain today. There are not many American journalists here who measure up to this standard. Ignorant, biased, and fictionalized stories are not, by any means, the exclusive property of the heroes of the handouts working for the Hearst press. The most respectable papers receive stories which must have made the wires blush for shame.

One correspondent, happily no longer with us, makes a good study of the type. The gentleman is William P. Carney, of the New York Times, now in Paris, formerly in Madrid. If any justification is needed for reviewing this man's work now that his stories are temporarily in cold-storage, it is that the man Carney is not as important as the type Carney. A paper of standing and reputation like the Times has Carneys in many other capitals of the world; it kept this man here for more than three years.

In the middle of sweltering August, I found all the newspaper men profiting from the new order in Spain by abandoning tie and collar, not to mention jacket. The streets had been given over to the working people, especially the worker in arms, and the usually precisely dressed fancy special correspondents, despite their only too mild passion for the populace, had melted into the throng. Did I say all? No, one representative of various reactionary papers, with a personal record of absolute liberalism in the days when the sun did not shine on the progressives, maintained a haughty correctness of dress that defied the wilting sun.

"Why the stubborn collar and tie, T——?" was my early query.

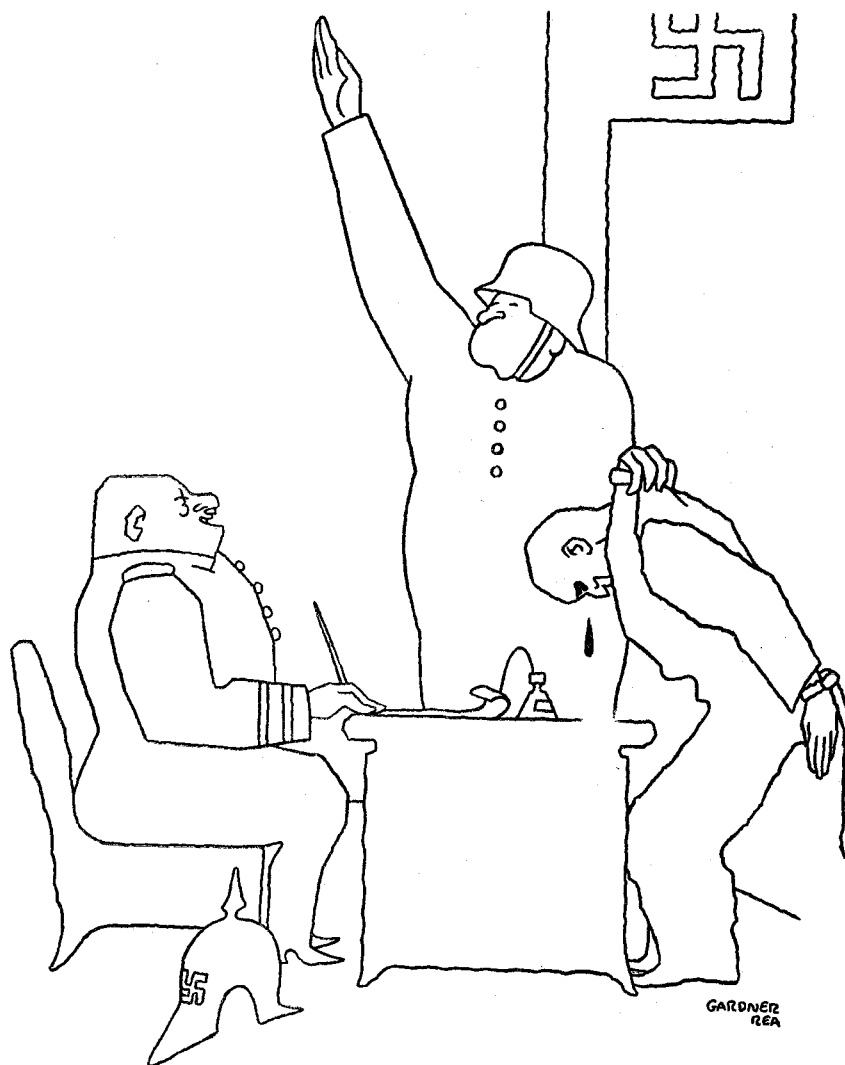
"Oh, all the life-long monarchists and reactionaries are running around in their shirt-sleeves, trying to look like Popular Front, now. Why, even Bill Carney has shed collar and tie and gone proletarian with a vengeance. I keep my clothes on so people don't confuse me with Bill!"

William P. Carney arrived in Madrid about Christmas of 1933. He had been third man for six years in the Paris bureau of the New York Times, according to the notes of men who knew him then. To be a third man in a foreign bureau requires no particular initiative. To remain third man for six years requires a positive genius for mediocrity. A mediocre man and a mediocre journalist, Carney is not known to have a close friend in the Spanish capital. But more demonstrative of his colorlessness is the fact that he could not

earn, with all his vicious Rightist bias, a real enemy, either. There are men who despise him for bad turns he has gone out of his way to do them, but they regard him as an intellectual child upon whom they cannot bestow hatred.

A fine illustration of the man and the reactions of people around him, comes quickly to mind. In October 1934, a certain liberal journalist defied the terrorists protected by the Lerroux regime, and sent factual dispatches relating the troop terror instituted in Asturias and elsewhere. Spanish journalists had been assassinated outright in Oviedo for similar indiscretions, but the clerical-fascists feared the international reaction to similar action against a prominent foreign correspondent. They therefore contented themselves with annoying him. The easiest way to do this was to enter his apartment, arrest him, and search his effects on the ground that "someone had

been shooting from the window." Needless to say, they found nothing to justify their entry and released him after two hours—long enough to examine his personal papers carefully. The detention was quite arbitrary and no charge was made against him at police headquarters even by way of justifying the arrest. Bill Carney supplied what they lacked. His Times dispatch stated that his colleague had been arrested on suspicion of harboring Socialist leaders, his close personal friends. There was absolutely no basis—real or pretended—for the story, but it had the merit of making a very weak libel case while severely damaging the liberal journalist's reputation for objectivity. Such a reflection at once weakens the effect of newspaper articles and threatens the earning power of the writer. No newspaper man could have sent the story without knowing its effect. Yet the journalist affected manifested something like a violently resigned



"Another volunteer for Franco, Herr Lieutenant."

Gardner Rea

annoyance with Carney, and let it go at that.

"The least you could do," a friend expostulated, "would be to sue him for libel, and show him up."

"Show him up for what?" countered the injured man. "For a silly child? But everyone knows he's that!" And he proceeded to recount an earlier encounter with the Carney, pardon me, intellect.

An ardent Catholic and a natural reactionary, the *Times* correspondent had been shocked to learn that his liberal colleague was likewise a Catholic. Catholic and liberal! The Carney intelligence could not be convinced that his co-religionists were far from sharing his social and political bias. He telephoned his colleague. Just like that. Out of a clear sky. A telephone call to verify his Catholicity!

"But you're not really Catholic?" he pleaded.

"Well, what do you want me to do about it; apologize?"

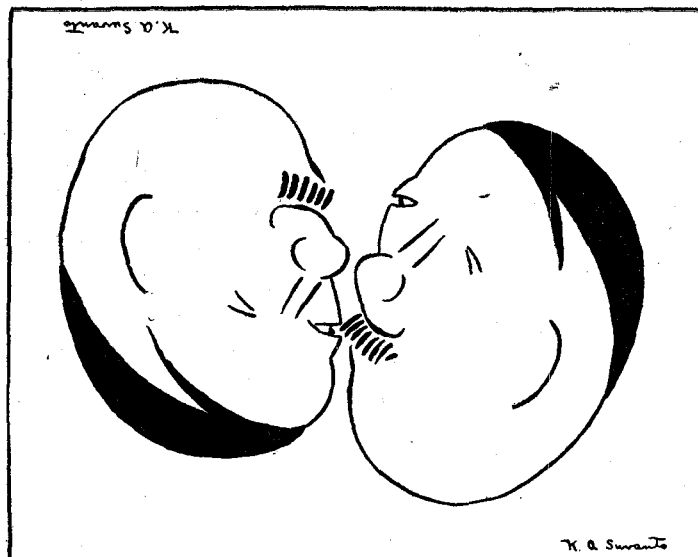
And in his bewildered, ignorant way, Carney plunged on and on: "But do you go to mass? When did you last take communion?" Only a request to call a very distant number interrupted his search for light.

CATHOLIC and reactionary—or, out of deference to the Spanish Catholics of the People's Front I should borrow Bergamin's phrasing, Catholic but reactionary—the New York *Times's* third man of the Paris office is believed to have asked for the Madrid post himself. The Jesuits, along with their corrupt allies of the so-called Radical Party, had just scored a great victory over the Republic. With the aid of the economic and physical club exercised by local *caciques*, they had been able to convert dissatisfaction with the Republican-Socialist pace of reform into an electoral majority for the parties of the Right. They now had two years in which to undermine the constitution.

Carney was quite a comfortable man. He reported objectively all the "facts" handed out by his Jesuit pals, and objectively omitted verifying the "claims" of the opposition. Thus, for him, via the columns of the New York *Times*, the months from December 1933 to October 1934 marked a growing lawlessness on the part of the Spanish workers, and a firm but just insistence upon public order by "decent" people. Falling wages, especially in the country; police terror, and a gradual "legal" introduction of fascism despite a constitution written for "a Republic of workers of all types," were not among the "facts" handed

out to Carney. And handed out were all his "facts." His chief tipster was a journalistic specimen of sorts; he lives chiefly by a hack agency job and substitute work when someone is sick. This work he gets because of his long residence in Madrid, but no one calls on him without a sigh, for he is literally defective mentally. Every word has to be spelled for

„Save Spain for whom“



"Together we will save Spain."

him. However, he can faithfully repeat the stories told him by the medieval minds that enjoy his company, so that he was just the man for a swivel-chair correspondent. For perspective, Bill was lucky enough to have the aid of a much abler man and better journalist, who gave assistance because to a certain extent he shared Carney's distress over anticlerical aspects of the popular cause in Spain. His ability and judgment prevented his descending to the practice of conscious distortion, at least to the extent practised by Carney, but through the latter he fed the flames.

And flames there were. Flames of indignation over the now thoroughly discredited "atrocities" of the Asturian revolutionaries in 1934. But the indignation subsided and disappeared in time to permit official terrorism to take a law-and-order aspect in the columns of the New York *Times*. Throughout 1935, Carney's journalistic honeymoon in Spain continued.

February 1936. Victory for the People's Front at the polls. Calamity for William P. Carney. His anti-popular-government tracts issued as dispatches to New York brought him frequent calls to the press department of the ministry of state. A great longing to go away from Spain came over Bill. He was seized with sudden boredom. Defeated at the polls, the reactionaries sponsored plots and political agitation in every nook and corner, in every Church and barrack. Republicans, Socialists, Communists, Catholics, Protestants, Masons of the People's Front grew more and more aware of the danger, more and more insistent

on a firm hand with the "decent" disturbers of public order. Through the pen of Frederick Birchall, Bill Carney poured out his rage. He selected interviews with "representative" men for the *Times's* ace. An interview with a Socialist journalist, full of the *Leftist hopes of his party man*, was printed as *representative of the aims of the People's Front*. An interview with an editor of *El Debate*—official mouthpiece of the Jesuit opposition—was carefully edited to eliminate ideals of Spanish reaction offensive to a democratic American audience. "He agreed," wrote Birchall, "that this is substantially what he would have said had he spoken in English!"

July 1936. The men of order take arms against the established order—take German and Italian arms against Spanish popular order! A day of danger and hope. Then dark days of repression. Carney repressed his pen.

Carefully worded dispatches that were often very respectful of the government and the provoked democratic revolution. In Madrid, Bill ground his teeth and, for want of tears to weep, took another drink. He had sent that dispatch because he couldn't send what he would have liked to write. There was the censor. There was his reactionary record behind him. But he had taken for granted that the New York *Times* would understand and would rewrite! Thus, he wrote that "the U.G.T. was doing good service for the government" by collecting, cataloguing, and caring for a variety of church valuables. Then he was crushed when he learned that the *Times* had printed the message just that way.

From time to time he would plaintively ask the desk man in Paris or London if there were any orders from the chief. Then, more plainly, "he would like to take a little vacation. Ask the Chief if he could leave in about a week." He sent his family away and his grip to the American embassy, but he never appeared at the embassy because drink overtook him at night and left him asleep, usually in the telephone building. He telephoned his dispatches in a lifeless voice. Just reporting rebel defeats at the gates of Madrid was unhappy journalism. Somewhere between dreamy sleep and ordinary drunkenness, Carney spent his horrible days in a democratic country.

Then an act of God released him: the American embassy moved to Valencia. In the flight that accompanied it, went the ex-third man of the Paris bureau. Back to Paris. Even back to third-man status, if necessary. But away from Madrid of the Popular Front. Away from Catholics who frown on Jesuitism, on political conspiracies in the church, on feudal landlordism, as Alfonsists and Carlists and medievalists. To Paris, to peace and journalistic "freedom," to the so welcome relief of a series of violent attacks on the people of Spain. Carney's second honeymoon. Would it be too, too cruel a fate for him to wake up, some day, in a Paris of the People's Front, a Paris of the men who shout, "Planes to Spain!"—a Paris that would want to reread the anti-popular outpourings of the third man of Paris?

Three Ballads from Spain

*The Popular Front poets of Spain
find things to sing about even now*

Adapted by Rolfe Humphries

THESE POEMS are taken from a collection entitled, *The Balladry of the Civil War*, published in the December number of the French magazine *Commune*. Spanish poets, hitherto divided by various literary tendencies, have united, in the hour of struggle, to revive the old ballad form as a medium for carrying the heroic story of modern Spain. Audiences of fifty thousand have listened to the poet Rafael Alberti reading these ballads. I have not seen the Spanish originals, except for the poem by Pla y Beltran, but have worked from the French versions made by Rolland-Simon, G. Pillement, and Gabriel Audisio; in doing so, I have used a good deal of license in paraphrasing, abridging, and adapting, so that in the strictest sense of the word, the poems are not offered as exact translations. But I hope I have not done violence to the spirit of the originals.—R. H.

The Armored Train (For the Railway Militia)

Rock and pony across the slopes,
Avila's high plateaus nearby,
Shrapnel bursting in wind and dust,
Symbol of clenched fist lifted high:
Trenches breaking the mountainside,
Summits gutted with mine and scar,
Platform, revetment, and ambushade,
All of the works of the art of war.

Setting sun on the aeroplanes,
Ground all gold in the slanting light—
Thunder across the high plateau,
Smoke as black as the heart of night,
Greenish flames in the ruddy air,
Cannon-hearted, the armored train
Blasts the Avilan mountainside,
The air is choked with the dusty rain.

The rearguard's batteries answer back,
Mortar-din and torpedo-noise,
Machine-guns batter the rocky flanks,
Here come Comrade Mangada's boys,
Here come the boys, along the line,
Ravine and mountain, the armored train,—
Clear the road for the conquering poor,
Open the right of way to Spain!

Dirty traffickers, off the track!
Fascist traitors, and all your crew,
Wretchedness, hunger, and tears, stand back,
The armored train will run over you!

Out of our sorrow, out of our joy,
Blossoms the future life of Spain:
Thundering over the high plateau,
Out of the way for the armored train!

And in words of steel, shout, "Hail, all hail,
Hail to the warriors of the rail!"

JOSE HERRERA.

French translation by Gabriel Audisio.

Ballad of the New Conquest of Granada

Granada, who will see you?
Not the Abencerrages,
The ones who hold you captive.

A bloody river thickens
Along your lowly alleys,
Staining with hate and struggle
The whiteness of your houses.

Granada, who will see you
Sacked by the Moors and taken?

Girls with their breasts cut off
Don't run to look from windows:
The tortures of the martyr
Are slow, and keep them waiting.

The Moorish king should see you
Sacked by the Moors and taken.

Green grows Valencia plain,
And greener still Granada.
The men who sow these acres
Are in the high Sierra.

Riders from our own cities
Converge upon Granada.

O city of the Carmens,
Sweet basil and carnation,
Low in the shade of sorrow
But hoping still for freedom!



Arthur Getz

Riding from North to Southland
In every kind of weather
The Andalusian riders
Come to surround Granada.

O countrymen, O fighters,
Lands that my pony tramples,
Generals without honor
Will never sack and take you.

And while the leader sighs
And the Alhambra trembles
The ring of horses' hoofs
Resounds from night to morning.

Only tomorrow's rose
Will see Granada taken.

PLA Y BELTRAN.

French translation by Rolland-Simon.

For Saturnino Ruiz, Printer by Trade

Here am I, among the books
Made in my own printing-shop.
These have passed between your hands,
Line by line, and leaf by leaf.

Still I see you, in the shop,
As you were before the war,
Still I see you, hard at work,
Toiler both of hand and brain.

Here's a book from Lorca's pen,
The first poems he ever wrote,
Set by you, and given life
By the power of the machine.

You and Lorca shared my days,
Printers, poets, all together.
Him they murdered at Granada,
And you fell at Somosierra.

But I often see you still
Strong and glorious in my sight,
Lorca with the martyr's palm,
You enhaloed in the light.

Hero of the working class,
Saturnino, printer, friend;
Fighters dying standing up
Live beyond the battle's end.

MANUEL ALTOLAGUIRRE.

French translation by G. Pillement.

A Last Word on Wally

*Our court reporter finds that
the game was worth the candle*

By Robert Forsythe

AT A RECENT meeting of the League for the Abolition of Great Britain, I was asked by the chairman to say the last word in the matter of Simpson, Windsor, Canterbury, and Baldwin. This is it.

I'll confess that in the beginning I was confused. Quite aside from my resentment at the treatment of Our Little Lady of the Sorrows from Baltimore, I suffered from a severe romantic stroke which mightily nigh did me in. As I have noted before, on any question of the validity of love, I wish to be counted as for it. In its place, sex is also nice. The fact that the king had been friendly with my countrymen did not weigh greatly with me, because I am not a chauvinist and I also knew people who knew these particular countrymen. Briefly, you may have them.

However, I am even less an admirer of that solid old beefeater known as Stanley Baldwin and of his incredibly more vigorous beefeater wife, Mrs. Stanley Baldwin. Try as I may, Stanley does not touch me. Mr. Eden kept well out of this bout, which was kind of him because I should not like to be compelled to give an opinion on Mr. Eden, suspecting him of corsets. It came down, therefore, to a question of the king and Stanley, and it must be admitted that Stanley had David on the boat almost quicker than was decent. For this and his general stuffiness, I could censure Baldwin, but maybe it was for the best.

The trouble with the whole affair was that people wouldn't keep lined up properly. The usual English crowd is easily managed and will stand stolidly in line from Wednesday until Friday for a chance to see a revival of *Charley's Aunt*, but on this occasion the leaping about was nothing short of scandalous. Just when it appeared that the king was the only friend left of the working man, you would find Sir Oswald Mosley and Lord Rothermere lurking back of him in the shadows. The presence of Lord Rothermere might be explained on the ground that His Ludship has never once been right in all his life, but that is tossing the thing about too lightly. In any fairly

conducted competition, Rothermere would certainly come forth with honors in stupidity, but his instincts for the lousy are too pronounced to be ignored. Where Rothermere stands is no place for an honorable man.

Continued reflection upon this state of affairs finally convinced me that love was not enough. There was the possibility, of course, that Rothermere was in the pay of the cabinet, knowing that England would as soon ask a recount on the Battle of Trafalgar as abide with Rothy, but that was giving his Ludship credit for astuteness, which is insane. It could only be that Rothermere and Beaverbrook and Mosley had something in mind. It was at this point that I recalled I was not a royalist and had never been a royalist and began kicking myself for letting Cupid make a fool of me. In this case, I am forced to conclude that even if Baldwin was wrong he was right. I base this on my newly formulated theory of whatever a king wants, don't let him have it. It's a simple thesis, but nothing from Forsythe at least was ever more profound. Being kind to a king has simply no sense to it. The only good kings are living on the Riviera. They love it, their subjects don't have to look at them any more, and it is an arrangement which must surely have a divine tint about it.

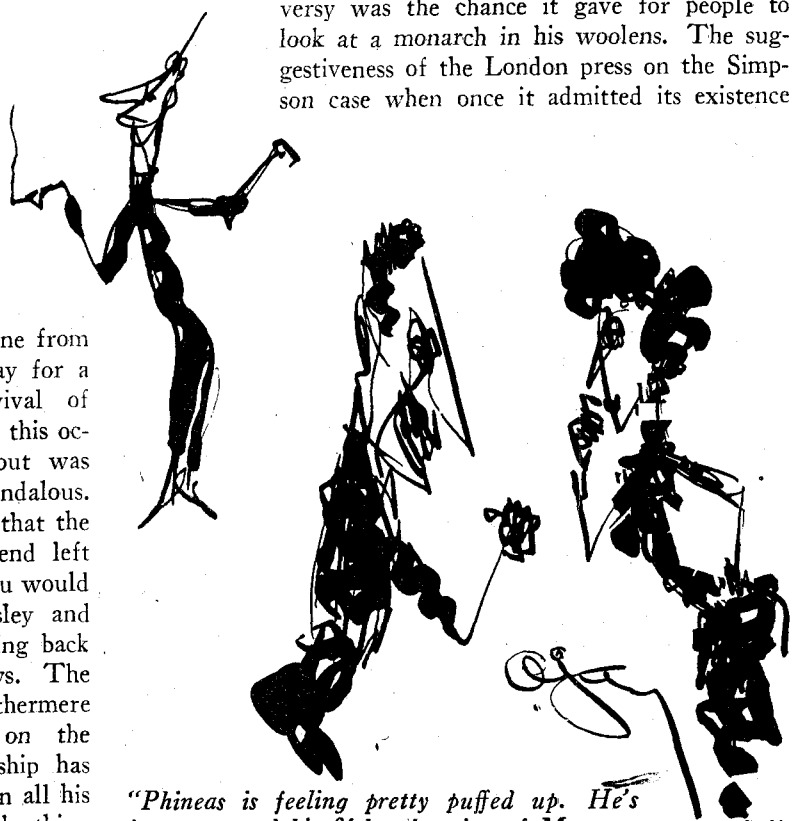
Another excellent thing about the controversy was the chance it gave for people to look at a monarch in his woollens. The suggestiveness of the London press on the Simpson case when once it admitted its existence

was only matched by the discussions in London society about the capabilities of the parties in question. For the first time since the late days of Queen Victoria, the king's name could be mentioned in the House of Parliament without loud cries of Order! Order! from gentlemen looking more like sealyhams than statesmen. The idea that the empire has already forgotten the incident is nonsense. The defection of David Windsor gave the Crown an unearthly wallop, and it may be only a few years before the Right Honorable Gentlemen of the Left will be as free to mention the new king as their predecessors once were to comment on Albert, who was Queen Victoria's consort. Albert stood for practically everything, and the queen got off little better. It is hard to believe but true. Those happy days may return sooner than we expect.

Altogether, the Simpson affair was worth it. When the archbishop of Canterbury mouthed his words to the microphone and said nasty things about David which he should have been saying months earlier if he was a man of proper kidney, the retort from the nation was suspiciously Bronxian. The Church may have won a victory, but two or three more such triumphs and the Salvation Army will undoubtedly take over the Abbey. My own conviction is that nothing so wonderful as the archbishop's speech has occurred since Hitler turned the Japanese into Aryans. From our point of view, it could just as easily have been written by the Comintern. In fact, it is my firm belief that we have a spy in all religious circles lately, manufacturing liturgical doctrine. Surely nothing else can explain it.

Summing it up, it may be said that the tragedy of David's departure can be borne even by his friends of the working class on the basis of the effect his actions have had on the idea of monarchy. He may have been double-crossed by the upper crust, but they haven't done themselves a great service. The prospect of anybody swooning over the new Windsor is remote, and about the most the empire can be said to have salvaged from the wreck is the belief that kings may be necessary but only in the same way that a queen is required for a Mardi Gras.

We may drop a tear for David on the theory that he was a good guy when he had it, but we must at the same time be firm with ourselves. The Simpson affair afforded Mr. Eden an excellent opportunity of double-crossing loyalist Spain in the company of Mussolini, but it also put the seal of approval on that old adage of the Sardonicians: Never give a king an even break.



"Phineas is feeling pretty puffed up. He's just engraved his fifth refutation of Marx on the head of a pin."

"Bodies by Fisher"

*An eye-witness account of the police
attack on the Flint sit-down strikers*

By Albert Maltz

ON Monday evening, January 11, when the sit-down strike in the Fisher Body plants in Flint, Mich., had reached the tenth day, General Motors gave the order to attack. Fisher No. 1 plant had about six hundred men inside, on the first floor. Fisher No. 2, in another section of town and connected by a bridge to the main Chevrolet plant, had only about one hundred. In addition, the strikers were on the second floor, a position strategically much less favorable than the first.

General Motors began its offensive by these steps: at noon the heat was shut off in the plant; at six o'clock company guards barricaded the first-floor entrance through which the sit-downers had been getting their food. Then the police and the so-called "Flint Citizens' Alliance," a company vigilante organization, were mobilized.

After ten days of sitting down, the strikers were without heat or food—and ten days and nights are a long time to be shut up away from home and family, with a vicious press to read and a vicious radio to listen to, with stool-pigeons, provocateurs, paid company whisperers, and with the whole uncertainty of the struggle at work to break down morale. Their morale was not broken. At the end of ten days they faced a fight, they fought it out, and today they are flaming with a spirit of solidarity which is much greater than they have had before.

The purpose of General Motors in taking these steps was purely to be provocative. They had prepared for violence and they wanted it. They wanted a chance to use their vigilantes. And they wanted martial law established if possible—as I write, the militia is waiting in the armory.

At seven o'clock, the union had a picket line before the entrance to Fisher No. 2. There were only about three hundred men. They circled around and around in front of the doors. It was bitter cold. Over a loud-speaker attached to an automobile, Victor Reuther, local organizer of the Auto Workers' Union, kept up a steady stream of talk about the strike. Occasionally, some music was switched on and the men sang. The auto was guarded by a wall of bodies—a few days before a union loud-speaker was smashed by a group of Chevrolet foremen.

On the second floor the windows were open and the strikers had their heads out. They sang, they shouted slogans, they called "Let's have some action," they called for food and heat, they wisecracked, they laughed, they yelled out, "Hey, Bob, if you see my ma, you

tell her I'm fine." They were mostly young men.

Through a window down the line, a rope went up and down with a bucket on its end, bringing in a little food. No one stopped it. There were only a few policemen visible. And on the opposite side of the street there was a steadily increasing crowd of citizenry—union men, reporters, plain-clothesmen, relatives of the sit-down strikers, one or two children bawling from the cold, thugs, vigilantes, company whisperers, middle-class sight-seers, and all those others who make up the varied crowd that assembles on such an occasion.

At about eight o'clock, several of the company guards, who had been barricading the entrance, were detailed off to capture a ladder which the strikers had begun to use as a supplement to the bucket. The company tactician may be considered to have made a mistake. As the guards went up, the strikers came down. The few guards who remained were brushed aside. The doors were opened. A cheer went up. First skirmish to the strikers.

About five minutes passed. The scene was comparatively quiet. The loud-speaker kept going, the picket line circled, and on the enclosed bridge which connected Fisher No. 2 to the building opposite, a large "C-H-E-V-R-O-L-E-T" sign winked on and off, on and off, regularly, quietly, definitely, telling all concerned who owned what, who gave the orders, who was running the works.

It started then. The picket line suddenly stopped. The men moved back at a walking pace. Six policemen came out of the darkness. They were dressed for a tear-gas attack—masks, guns, helmets, shell vests. The strikers closed the doors. The policemen walked forward. One stepped up, smashed twice at the glass door with the end of his gun and then, without pause, fired point-blank at the men inside.

A gas gun sounds like a jumbo sky rocket. There is a burst of flame and an instantaneous cloud of smoke. It is more effective than a bomb: it can be aimed, it bursts full without any delay, it cannot be picked up and flung back. And it is a violent chemical. At close quarters, temporary blindness is possible with severe after-effects to eyes and lungs; at a distance a faint whiff of it makes one's eyes burn and tear immediately.

When the first shells were fired into the plant, the men on the picket line rushed forward. The policemen turned on them and fired point-blank. This was how some of the casualties occurred, at this time and later. Men

were struck by the shells themselves. But the most serious injuries to the strikers, and the greater number, came from steel-jacketed bullets from service revolvers or buckshot from riot guns.

Three things happened then: the men outside fell back twenty or thirty feet. From the inside there came three powerful streams of water, from the downstairs doors and from the upper windows—the sit-downers had turned on the fire hoses. They struck full force at the policemen. The cops fell back. And then the strikers charged—with tin cans, with chunks of frozen snow, with fists—they had no prepared ammunition, and there were no brickbats lying around.

The police kept shooting. There were twenty to thirty reports, only some of which were followed by bursts of flame. The others were riot guns at close quarters. But the gas had less effect than hoped for. Three things were against its success: the water from the fire hoses, which cleaned the air; a cold night with a slight wind so that the gas did not rest heavy on the ground; and, most of all, the flaming courage of two hundred men who didn't care a damn about gas or police.

And through the twenty minutes or so that the attack lasted, there was one steady, unswerving note: the strikers' loud-speaker. It dominated everything! The voice of Victor Reuther, organizer of the union, rose to a tremendous pitch. It was like an inexhaustible, furious flood pouring courage into the men. That voice never stopped for breath, for thought, to escape gas or bullets. And it won. The strikers won. The police ran back.

The crowd of bystanders had increased. They were now divided into two opposite groups. The police had fired tear gas at them, too, and forced them back. As a body, they did not join into the fight, although as more and more union men came onto the scene, volunteers slipped into the center group of pickets. There was no question of the basic sympathy of the crowd. What was lacking was a uniform passion, a measure of final solidarity sufficient to make them join in the fight, to join the little group of men who were facing the police isolated, unprotected, alone.

And in addition there were varied elements in that crowd. There were those who immediately jumped into their cars and went home—out of the way. There were the company men who began instantly to circulate a story that the fight had started between strikers and non-strikers and that the police had come in only to pacify both sides. This, too, was carefully prepared beforehand. It is part of the

general fraud that General Motors is trying to put over on the public—that this nationwide strike is a struggle not between capital and labor, but between strikers and non-strikers. There was the woman who runs a restaurant a little down the street, who said after it was all over: "Isn't it terrible—I mean about the Mattson boy?" And there were the men like the young, white-faced worker who ripped off his leather jacket. His wife locked her arms around his neck and she cried out over and over in a voice that was curiously soft and passionate at the same time: "No, no, I won't let you. I won't let you." He was silent, struggling with her. She kept crying out in her soft, frightened voice. He tore her hands away and ran into the fight.

That was the first attack. It was cold-blooded, murderous, carefully calculated, precisely carried out. The cops retired. The strikers held their ranks and the doors. The ambulances came down and bleeding men were carried out—wounds in the leg, the back, the shoulder, the face, one man with four wounds and a bullet in his bowel.

About twenty minutes later, the gas squad returned. But this time the strikers had some ammunition: rubber hoses, bricks torn up

from the floor of the plant, a section of curb-stone, and, mostly, heavy automobile door hinges carried down from upstairs. And when the cops attacked, more of them this time, the men advanced to meet them. And again the loud-speaker kept up its furious, torrential cry. It could not be stopped and the men would not be driven back. And again they held and again the cops retired, this time with some casualties amongst them. They had been battered by bricks and hinges—one of them had been struck over the head by a milk bottle and had had his gas gun and mask taken away from him. Today's papers report eleven policemen with injuries.

Now the pickets built a barricade. They drove autos into a solid line across the street. This prevented squad cars from coming through. Neatly in its place in the barricade was a squad car which they had overturned and captured. And a hundred and fifty yards down the street was another barricade held by the police to prevent sympathizers from coming through to the pickets.

And again, for the third time, the gas squad came back. This time they fired directly at the bystanders as well as at the pickets. They fired into a restaurant where wounded men were waiting for ambulances and where

men and women had run for protection. They fired into the building where the sit-downers were, but the men ran up to the roof and a hailstorm of bolts, hinges, and everything throwable rained down upon them. And again they were driven back—this time pursued by strikers to the door of the plant they were stationed in.

The attacks stopped. Thirteen strikers had been shot. General Motors against the auto workers. Property rights against the rights of people. But the workers held the plant.

From then on, the strikers took over completely. They stationed their barrels of ammunition, they patrolled, they kept the picket line circling. They kept the loud-speaker going. Food was brought in. Forces were added to the men in the plant. The picket line kept going all night. Overhead the Chevrolet sign was winking, telling who was who. But down below, the strikers were running things. The situation remains very critical. The militia are likely to be used—and used against the strike although many of the union men have faith in Governor Murphy and his alleged labor sympathies. But General Motors showed its face and shed blood. And the strikers showed what they meant by their slogan: "Till hell freezes over."



SEEING AMERICA FIRST

III—Southern Court

Herb Kruckman

READERS' FORUM

A drive for medical aid for Spain—Henry Seidel Canby protests—Some thoughts on Franco

• The Medical Bureau of the American Friends of Spanish Democracy is only a couple of months old. It is really just getting under way. The sendoff of the first unit was considered the commencement of the drive toward another, much larger, much more impressive sendoff. Last Saturday morning, when the *Paris* sailed, reporters were there, newsreels clicked (they were calling all day to make arrangements), hundreds of well-wishers were there to say godspeed. But all this was a small beginning.

The accountant's report of last Thursday's meeting shows that more than \$5000 was contributed by 2000 people at the sendoff for America's first surgical unit and ambulance corps to Spain. "Stem the Blood of Spanish Democracy" was our slogan in the first drive. And America gave us more than \$28,000 in cash, more than \$12,000 in medical supplies, anesthetics, antiseptics, for medical aid to Spain.

But what about our next drive? The British Medical Aid to Spain has sent over forty-four surgeons and physicians and nurses, and we have sent only sixteen. But in a month? Will we receive the \$100,000 we shall ask America to contribute?

There is every reason to believe that we will. America—not through its Congress, not through its Washington policy, but rather through its people's dollars and its pennies—is with loyalist Spain. America will answer Franco's "big push" by concentrated effort of its own. America will not let us down in the humanitarian work. The American Red Cross is doing nothing. The International Red Cross, in the little that it contributes, divides its aid equally between the loyalists and the rebels. As Congressman Bernard said at our sendoff meeting, "they give equal recognition to the bandit and to the homeowner whose house is being robbed." We recognize only the homeowner. We recognize the only legitimate government in Spain. We send our medical aid to the women and children of Madrid, of Valencia, of Barcelona. America will not let us down.

SAUL CARSON,
Executive Director, Medical Bureau,
American Friends of Spanish Democracy,
Room 301, 20 Vesey Street, New York.

From Dr. Canby

• The article by Arnold Shukotoff in your number of January 5, 1937, is a glaring instance of the difficulty which certain liberals put in the way of those who sympathize with many of their ideas. In order to clear up at the beginning my relations to the Jerome Davis case, may I say, first, that the "build-up" in the article which seems to be intended to establish a relation between my actions in reference to the review of Mr. Davis's book and the action of Yale University, is quite misleading. While it is true that my name is still carried on the Yale catalogue as a lecturer *in absentia*, I have done no work and had no official relations of any kind with Yale for four or five years. Also, Mr. Thomas W. Lamont, who is mentioned in the article, certainly knew nothing whatsoever of the procedure followed in reviewing Mr. Davis's book nor, so far as I know, has ever read the brief review which we published. Further, Mr. Lamont is not, as stated in the article, the publisher of the *Saturday Review*, nor does he have any managerial or directorial connection with it.

Professor Davis, my files show, always pressed upon us the rapid and extensive reviewing of his books, and on one occasion at least asked for two reviews on account of the importance of the book. I am in sympathy with many of Mr. Davis's ideas and much of the work he has done in New Haven. Hence when a book of his came in dealing with the general field of liberalism, I, remembering his

numerous solicitations in the past, sent it to Professor Laski as the man most likely to give it an intelligent and sympathetic review. Professor Laski has for many years been one of our most valued contributors. No review came in. I have copies of three letters in my files asking for the belated criticism, the last of which regrets that a review, which Professor Laski told Mr. Davis has been written on a steamer and sent to us, had evidently gone astray. Certainly no such review was ever received in this office. Since this review has been lost, as reviews written on steamers sometimes are, and a new edition of the book was about to appear, we asked Mr. Laski if he would send us a brief note, it being impossible to publish a lengthy review so long after the original book had appeared. He finally replied with a somewhat emphatic letter, asking us to call off Professor Davis if we could, and print the note he enclosed which might prove useful for publishers' purposes. This note was frankly a "blurb." But I still wished to give Mr. Davis some satisfaction and therefore edited the "blurb" into a form which the *Saturday Review* could publish without seeming to lend itself to publishers' advertisements. This, of course, was entirely within my editorial rights. I wrote Mr. Laski that he knew very well that we did not publish "blurbs," told him what I had done, and he has made no objection. But perhaps the enclosed letter, which is a copy of one I wrote to Mr. Davis at what I hoped was the end of the controversy, will state the whole matter:

"April 21, 1936.

"Dear Mr. Davis:

"I have just returned from the south and find your letter to Miss Loveman. It is only necessary that we state what I said in my previous letter with one or two additions. Neither I nor, so far as I know, any one in the office knows even what your book is about. We sent it out immediately to Mr. Laski when it came in. I quite properly deleted the "blurb" from the paragraph Mr. Laski sent in because he told me it was a blurb and he was writing it only to satisfy you and your publishers. We do not print things that way and he ought to know it. It is, as you must have noticed, written in the form of a publisher's blurb. The final cutting was done by me on proof, Miss Loveman having made one or two slight changes when it came in before asking me to look at it. She was not aware that I had made further cuts, hence her statement to you. The only mystery in this whole business is what became

of Laski's original review which I should, of course, have published whether highly condemnatory or highly laudatory. It is not necessary to build up an edifice of suspicion for there is no cause, as I think you might readily see for yourself by noticing how frequently in the *Review* we have attacked books favorable to the "financial" interests and defended books prejudicial to them. I regret that you did not get a review in the beginning but I do not think that you have fully considered how many books are published in a year and how urgent our problems are. We cannot go back unless a real injustice has been done for which we are responsible and I do not regard that as being the case here. I might note finally that I wrote, being solicited by you, at least three times to Mr. Laski asking him to do the review. Finally, he wrote me that he was bored with the whole business and was sending in something which might serve to please you and your publishers. I do not regard this as a review.

"Sincerely yours,
"HENRY S. CANBY, Editor."

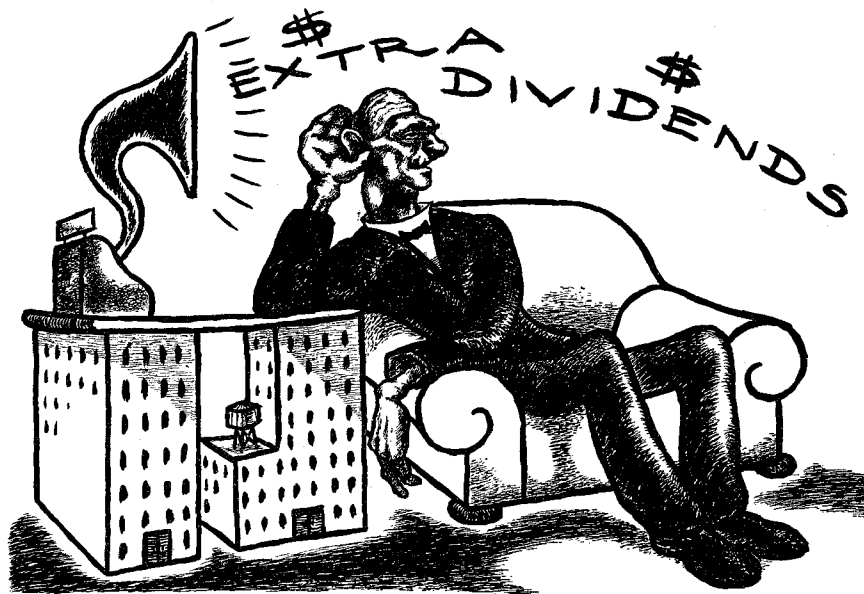
Briefly, the whole intent of this office was to give Mr. Davis generous treatment. If an error was made it was in endeavoring to make up for a loss for which we were not responsible by printing a statement over an influential name which might be useful to Mr. Davis in circulating his book. The intimation that Mr. Laski's review was received here and suppressed is contemptible.

HENRY S. CANBY.

• I heard a baby cry last night. Its state of utter helplessness touched my heart. (The most helpless and innocent of all living creatures is a human tot.) And then I thought about General Franco, who has been hailed as "the champion of Christianity," etc. (the doctrine of "suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," "and a little child shall lead them"), and I remembered how Franco's air fleet had not only bombed the babies of Madrid, but had afterward swooped low, and raked these sprawling infants with machine-gun fire.

Oh, wonderful "defender of the Faith," etc. All that Franco would have needed to do to become a second Sargasso would have been to challenge nine of these babies to a duel, but the golden opportunity was lost forever. "He who hesitates is lost" (and so is the fascist cause of General Franco).

DR. EDWARD JAMES IRVINE.



Absentee Ownership

Bennett Buck

NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Spain and America

IT IS still literally true, as it was almost two months ago, that every day lost by General Franco in his now long-overdue drive to take Madrid is a day gained for democracy in Spain. Two things have happened as a result of the fascist failure to capture Madrid. The concentration of fascist forces around Madrid has given the rest of loyalist Spain an opportunity to train recruits, reorganize industry on a working basis, and stiffen the political unity of the anti-fascist forces. Secondly, this very solidification and organization outside of Madrid has made the fall of Madrid—to be sure, less likely now than ever before—less important than at the beginning of the siege. It was always true that the anti-fascist forces would carry on with Madrid if possible, without Madrid, if necessary. Today, however, that second possibility is less ominous than before.

As Ralph Bates points out in this issue, political disunity among the anti-fascists was the hope of the Reaction. It is fast becoming their despair. Within the last six months, some of the political gains have been: unification of the Socialist and Communist parties of Catalonia into the United Socialist Party; unification of the Socialist and Communist youth organizations into one body; unification of the Socialist and Communist parties in many localities, *e.g.* Valencia; complete political harmony between the Socialist and Communist parties of Spain; entrance of the Anarchists, after seventy-five years of dogmatic isolation, into the governments of both Valencia and Barcelona; isolation of the splitting Trotskyists.

If Spain has become an international battle-ground, international fascism has forced the issue. Franco, it is now said, cannot take Madrid without 80,000 German troops. Add Italian and other mercenary foreign troops to this figure, and the sum is a good deal larger than the regular Spanish army. This is all the refutation needed to the ancient charge that communism, socialism, and all other progressive doctrines are imported from abroad. Communism, socialism, and democracy in Spain are Spanish; it is the Reaction which is a foreign army of occupation.

More reason for contempt of and vigorous opposition to our own government which, under cover of preserving peace, is helping fascism blast one of the remaining foundations of peace. The sudden activity in the State Department against American volunteers for the Spanish loyal forces is the kind of indirect aid which Franco needs as a complement to Hitler's and Mussolini's direct aid. The shades of Kosciusko, Lafayette, and those other "foreign"

volunteers who fought for our independence are insulted by this campaign. Those generations of Americans who were raised to honor these "foreign" volunteers are repudiated.

The clearing-house for all efforts to aid Spain is the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City; chairman, Bishop Francis J. McConnell; executive secretary, Reverend Herman J. Reissig. More than five hundred receiving stations for food, clothing, and medical supplies are maintained by the committee. Practically every anti-fascist organization in America, including the Communist and Socialist parties, are affiliated. Spanish-speaking people may work through the affiliated Spanish Anti-Fascist Committee at 59 Henry Street, Brooklyn. There are also trade-union, medical, and Irish sub-divisions of the North American Committee. Deserving of special attention is the American Society for Technical Aid to Spanish Democracy, 31 East 27th St., N. Y., which is sending engineers, technicians, and metal and electrical workers to Spain to release Spaniards for the front.

Exhibitionism and Sabotage

OURS is the regrettable duty of devoting this space to an attack on the NEW MASSES printed in the January 16 issue of the Socialist Call. We were accused of sabotaging the fight in support of Spanish democracy on the ground that we rejected a full-page advertisement soliciting funds for the "Debs Column" because we were "afraid" that it was "illegal." The charge is false except in that we did reject the advertisement.

Our reason for rejecting it, to which we still adhere, is that this type of house-top shouting, while it may get publicity for the shouters, can only add materially to the difficulty of sending volunteers. This view is substantiated by the recent clamor of the reactionaries for the illegalization of recruiting—a clamor which arose directly after the "Debs Column" publicity splash. The opposition is great enough without intensifying it by exhibitionism.

We would be happy if we could say that the practical work of the Socialist Party in behalf of Spain was as ardent as its tub-thumping. We would like to report that the Socialist Party in New York had not recently, despite affiliation of its National Executive Committee to the North American Committee, ordered its branches not to send money to that fund-raising body. We would be happy to report that the Socialist Party had raised more than \$73.65 in the New York November 26 tag day for the benefit of the North American Committee (the Communist Party and the Young Communist League raised \$3,657.15). We should like to report that the Socialists' recent Madison Square Garden meeting for Ambassador de los Rios had earned some money for the cause, instead of showing a loss—a loss which was occasioned by \$8673 for "expenses" (the Communist Party's expenses for such meetings never exceed \$4000). We would like to report that the Socialist Party locals had not issued leaflets like the one picturing a Spanish worker stabbed in the back by a hand labeled "Popular Front."

It was not until many hundreds of American anti-fascists were already in the trenches around Madrid (judging from newspaper reports of which the Socialist Call must be aware—and aware, too, that they were not there because of the Socialist Party), that the ballyhoo about the "Debs Column" began. When and if that column arrives in Spain, perhaps the Socialist Call will be better informed on "sabotage."

REVIEW AND COMMENT

Stalinism and Hitlerism—Progressive and regressive fiction—History in Florence and California

WE have here* the abridged text of Stalin's report of November 25 last to the Special All-Union Congress of Soviets. From his simple language and attitude in this speech, you would not guess that Stalin was introducing to the people of the Soviet Union their new constitution, the legislative sign of a victorious socialist economy. It is on the face of it a report and little more. There is some humor in one section, some quoting of salty peasant proverbs, some laughter at the expense of German pedants; but there is no rhetoric. The spirit of most of it is statistical, with Stalin working, as in all his compositions, towards a scientific clarity and logic. Nevertheless, the short work breathes the dignity of the man himself; and the greatness of the moment colors deeply the sober, stock-taking manner of most of it.

Indeed, introducing as it does a constitution which is not a program but a confirmation of achievements, the report is in large part just that—a stock-taking. The conditions which make this new declaration of basic law possible and necessary must first be established, and Stalin proceeds carefully to establish them. What changes, he asks, have occurred in the life of the U. S. S. R. since 1924, when the former constitution was adopted? The tasks of that period were to eliminate the vestiges of capitalism in industry and agriculture by exposing in practical competition the inadequacy of the old techniques of making and marketing as compared with the new—in Stalin's words, to "organize the superiority of the socialist system over the capitalist system." The limited revival of capitalism under the New Economic Policy provided a healthy competitive climate for socialist production to take root in. The years of the Five Year Plans were the great growing years of collectivism in factory and farm, resulting in the overwhelming and stifling of capitalist economy and the final maturing of socialism.

What have been the results of these developments on the human structure of the old Soviet Russia of 1924? The working class has ceased to be a working class proper, since it is no longer exploited by capitalists; for it, the term proletariat is out of date. It is a working class "having no counterpart in the history of the world," says Stalin. And the old peasantry, that "class of small producers, with atomized members, scattered over the face of the whole country, plowing their lonely furrows on their small farms with backward techniques, slaves of property, etc.," has disappeared. The Russian peasantry of 1936, with its economy based upon collective property which came into being as a result of collective labor, is a peasantry "having no counterpart in the history of mankind." The

intelligentsia, finally, springing nowadays in great part from the masses and serving the masses, is an intelligentsia "without counterpart in any country on the globe." At the same time, in the national sphere, the old federation has given way to a genuine multinational union of free and equal autonomous republics.

This is socialism, the first phase of communism; and such, says Stalin, is the base on which the new constitution rests. He then proceeds to point out how the constitution embodies the political principles arising from the changed economic and class status of the Union. Unlike bourgeois constitutions, which recognize in their tacit fashion the unequal distribution of property and the consequent class hostilities—which indeed spring from the very necessities inherent in such conditions—the new law of the U. S. S. R. recognizes neither these conditions nor these necessities. Its concept of democracy is a positive one. It is concerned not only with rights, but with the opportunities to exercise them.

Stalin makes other points in connection with the new basic law of socialism. He answers, moreover, certain capitalist critics of that law, and devotes considerable time to rejecting various inappropriate amendments which were submitted to the commission during the long period of public discussion which preceded the Congress. He concludes by pointing out—still with the same easy eloquence—how from the new constitution will flow the strength and confidence to defeat fascism and win new victories for communism.

While we are speaking of phenomena without counterpart, we should add that this is a document which for charm, frankness, and simplicity can have few counterparts among the state papers of history. And just as it confirms socialism in the field of law, so it exemplifies the new regime in the character of leadership.

F. W. DUPEE.

Drang nach Osten

HITLER OVER RUSSIA?, by Ernst Henri.
Translated by Michael Davidson. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

THE European crisis is rapidly coming to a head. Whether the spark of war is ignited by a Nazi putsch in Austria, in Spain, through an incident on the Polish-Soviet border or elsewhere, one thing is certain: Hitler is ready to plunge the world into a second war by an attack, direct or indirect, upon the Soviet Union. This, however, will not be merely a war between Socialist Russia and Fascist Germany. Leaping from the Dvina, the Baltic, and the Danube, right across the continent, as Mr. Henri puts it, it "will leave no country untouched and spare no state or group of states, no matter how 'isolated.'"

To achieve his aggressive aim, Der Fuehrer

is leaving no stone unturned. He is feverishly making new alliances and cultivating assiduously all the fascist elements in the Balkan, Baltic, and eastern-European states. He supplies arms to fascist Bulgaria and encourages Hungary in her treaty-revisionist designs. Goering's "hunting" trips to Poland and Dr. Schacht's visits to Central Europe are not accidents. Neither is the German-Japanese anti-Soviet pact an accident. Behind the recently concluded accord between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia—coming so soon after King Boris's visit to Berlin—the hand of Alfred Rosenberg's "foreign office" is clearly visible: both Belgrade and Sofia are important links in Hitler's "crusade against Bolshevism."

That is the theme of *Hitler Over Russia?*, a comprehensive and remarkably well-documented analysis of the present situation in Europe. Although Mr. Henri's thesis is a familiar one and some of his forecasts are open to question, *Hitler Over Russia?* is so richly informative that no one who wishes to understand the real facts behind the newspaper headlines can afford to miss it.

Beginning with a detailed account of the "June purge" of 1934, which signalized the defeat of the German middle class and its army, the S.A. (which had raised Hitler to power only to betray it), and the ascendancy of Thyssen and the Ruhr barons, Mr. Henri paints a grim picture of the "Fascist International," the little Hitlers and their satellites who operate today in every nook and corner of Europe: Mikhailoff and his Macedonian I.M.R.O., Dr. Ante Pavelic and the Ustashi organization in Yugoslavia, the Hungarian Tszists, Mannerheim and the Lappo movement in Finland, and, of course, the group of adventurists of the Baltic Brotherhood. Subsidized by Thyssen, trained and "inspired" by Alfred Rosenberg, they commit terrorist acts, stage *coups d'état*, and sow chaos in Europe, preparing the ground for the "Hoffmann plan."

Some skeptics will, no doubt, disparage Mr.



George Schreiber

*THE NEW SOVIET CONSTITUTION, by Joseph Stalin. International Publishers. 2c.

Henri's credulity in considering seriously General Hoffmann's plan. The whole thing is indeed a weird fantasy, the dream of an obsessed general who, although he has had no contact with the Red Army of today, has never been able to forget the spectacle of Lenin's ragged and barefooted revolutionary battalions suing for peace at Brest-Litovsk. One should not forget, however, that psychopathology is important to an understanding of the Nazi mentality. The conquest of the rich and fertile area of the Soviet Ukraine—the core of this plan—has long been an object of the predatory desire of many pretenders. The vision of a Germany extending from the Rhine to the Black Sea has long been obsessing the minds of Hitler and Rosenberg. There is every indication that Mr. Henri is right: the Hoffmann plan, hopeless though it is, is the number-one plan on the Nazi program. It supersedes all Herr Hitler's other pet plans for the creation of a "world Teutonic order," even the old Schlieffen plan for the invasion of Belgium and France which, while by no means abandoned, has been for the moment "forgotten."

Are there any chances for the Hoffmann plan to succeed? Mr. Henri believes not. His reasons are based, as his publishers truthfully remark, not upon propaganda but upon the bare facts of strategy, tactics, economics, and technical equipment. At this point, however, he commits several errors which, while they do not invalidate his thesis, tend to confuse somewhat the situation in eastern Europe. The success or failure of the Nazis' attack upon the Soviet Union depends upon numerous factors, not the least of which is Hitler's ability to win over to his side such key countries as Rumania and particularly Poland.

Will Poland be won over to the Nazi cause? According to Mr. Henri, Polish fascism which, like that in Germany and Hungary, is already in possession of state power, will be at the head of Hitler's columns in eastern Europe. It will have the same rallying and commanding role as Hungarian revisionism in the Danubian states. On the surface, this may appear logical. It is well known that Marshal Pilsudski, whose foreign policy Colonel Josef Beck is now carrying on, never gave up his dream of erecting a Great Polish Empire out of the triple union, Poland-Lithuania-Ukraine. He concluded a non-aggression pact with Germany in which he renounced opposition to German expansion in Austria, towards Czechoslovakia, and in the Balkans, while Hitler in turn renounced, officially at least, all claim to Danzig, West Prussia, and Upper Silesia for ten years. The well-known P.O.W. (Polish military organization) and the "Colonels' group" (the unofficial party of the Polish feudal aristocracy), which had been hitherto ruling the country, are rabidly anti-Soviet and pro-German.

In spite of all these seemingly strong pro-Nazi forces in the country, there are many reasons to believe that Poland will never join Germany in a war upon the Soviet Union. For one thing, Poland more than any other

country has reasons to fear her own population. Of the thirty million inhabitants, more than ten million are not Poles. In a war upon the Soviet Union, seven million Ukrainians of western (now Polish) Ukraine and Volhynia and three million Jews, oppressed and exploited, together with the organized Polish workers, are a great force to be reckoned with. As to the urban, commercial, and industrial bourgeoisie, for purely economic reasons it is as rabidly anti-German as it is pro-French. Its party, the Endeks, anti-Semitic and fascist though it is, is definitely pro-French. It is largely because of their pro-French orientation that the Endeks were able to maintain their prestige and wield such enormous power even after they were so badly defeated after Pilsudski's last coup. Most important, however, is Poland's well-justified fear—this view was impressed upon me time and again by well-informed Poles during my visit to Poland—that if she continues to play Hitler's imperialist game, to permit the Austro-German *Anschluss* and the partition of Czechoslovakia, thereby strengthening Hungary's revisionist designs, she will alienate her Rumanian and French allies and leave herself at the mercy of the Nazi expansionists. The

Poles are no fools. They know well that a Nazi victory means ultimately the death of Poland as an independent state.

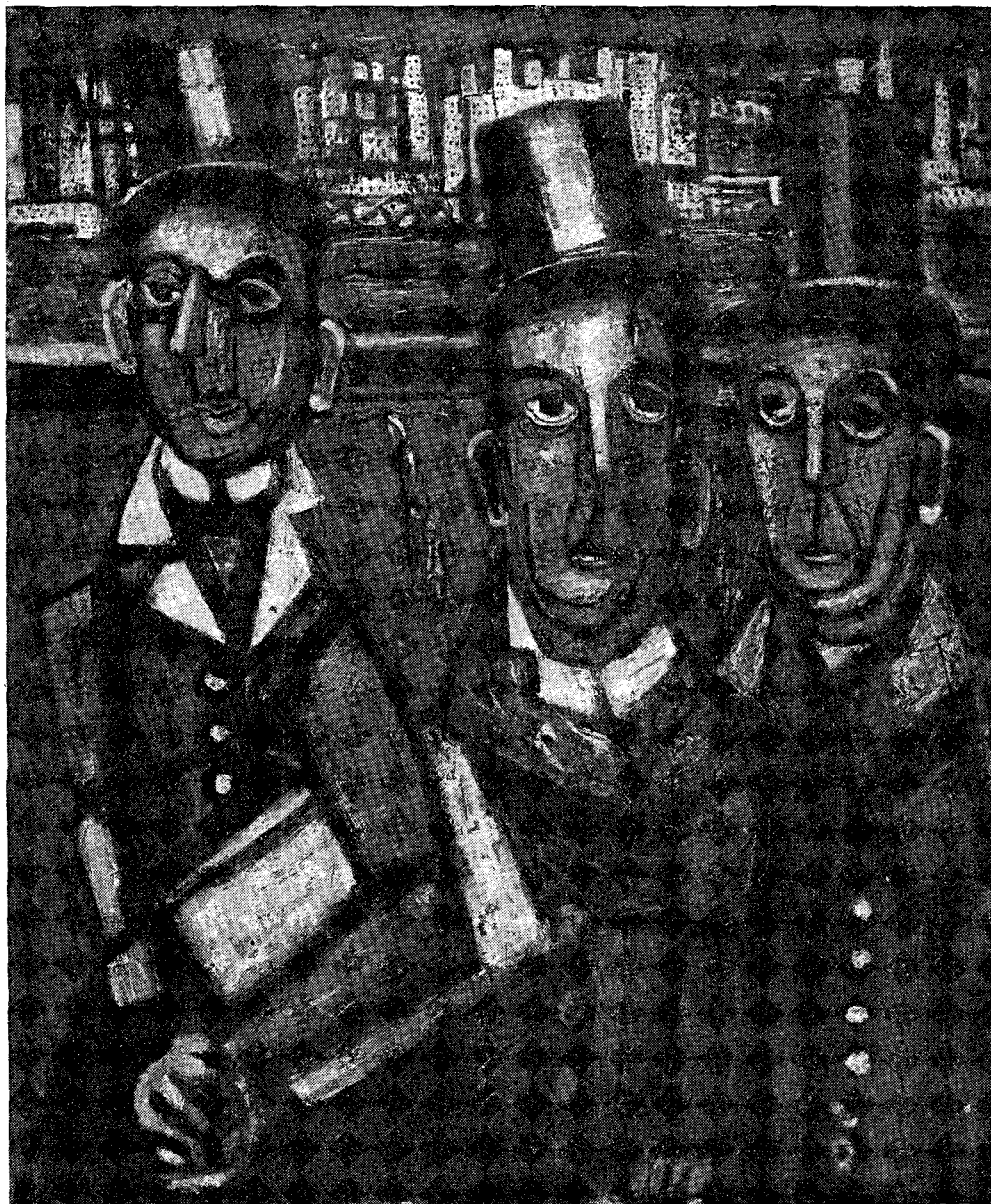
In the main, however, Mr. Henri is right. Poland or no Poland, no matter what the odds against the Nazis may be, we may hear any day of Goering's air squadrons dropping bombs upon defenseless Ukrainian peasants. An aerial bombardment of non-combatants, however, as the Spanish situation has shown, does not win wars. When the fascist armies are finally forced to meet the class-conscious and vastly superior army of socialism—described so excellently by Mr. Henri in his chapter "Can Germany Beat the Soviet Union?"—it bodes ill for Nazism.

LEON DENNEN.

Ivory Tower: Red Square

A BOOK OF CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES, by Dorothy Brewster, Ph.D., with an Appendix on Writing the Short Story, by Lillian Barnard Gilkes. Macmillan. \$3.50.

IF making an anthology is a creative act, the best results will appear when the anthologist's purpose is most clearly defined (at least in his own mind) and the scope of



Three Wise Men

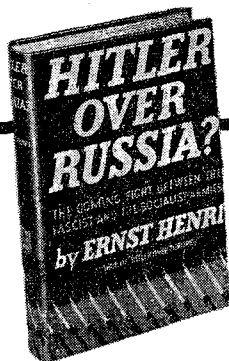
Tschaobasov

the material most practically limited. Catch-all collections of the absolute "best" are notoriously amorphous, seldom expressing any purpose other than a pious intention colored by highly personal dilections.

It is a pity that by her noncommittal title Dr. Brewster suggests that she has made this kind of anthology, whereas the opposite is true. Her springboard was the observation that in this unstable period, literature reflects "the prospects and portents of revolutionary change and counter-revolutionary regression." Thus her book divides naturally into two halves: "what may be roughly labeled ivory-tower stories, and the best of those with revolutionary themes or implications." To emphasize the point that the distinction is not absolute, but rather an extension of a tendency antedating the present century, she has set at the heart of her book, summing the one half and prefacing the other, two stories of an earlier day: Henry James's "Altar of the Dead" breathing a delicate nostalgic incense over the irrecoverable past, and Chekhov's "The Princess," a sharp diagnosis of "the poison of inequality" which was soon to bring the Princess's world to ruin.

In making her selections ("without restriction as to country"), Dr. Brewster has deliberately avoided, on the one hand, the "pigeons on the grass, alas" kind of writing "where the poets talk to themselves rather than to the reader," and on the other hand "that sensational—however authentic—violence of incident which belongs to the field of 'reportage.'" But in avoiding dogmatic-seeming extremes, she has occasionally blurred her design. One is puzzled to find Langston Hughes's satire on the white upper crust ("Rejuvenation Through Joy") in the ivory-tower section, while his ironical portrait of a "dependable" (from the white point of view) member of his own race ("Professor") is placed with the "Red Square" stories—both being satires on the escapist, regressive, self-protective principle. Also, a case could be made for Naomi Mitchison's "The Poor Relation and the Secretary" as a story with revolutionary rather than conservative implications.

On the whole, however, the anthologist makes her point with intelligence and taste. Of the thirty-seven stories, there is only one I should call bad—"May-Day Celebration" by T. O. Beachcroft—while many belong in the top flight of contemporary fiction, such as Katherine Anne Porter's "María Concepción," the unforgettable "Wine" by the Hungarian Sandor Sergel, Erskine Caldwell's "Candy-Man Beechum," Ignazio Silone's "Simplicio," Fusao Hayashi's "Cocoons," and "The Martyr's Widow" by Agnes Smedley. George Corey's "\$595 F. O. B." contains a fatal technical flaw: an auto-union organizer, whom we have every reason to accept as honest, is, in the end, suddenly and without preparation, exposed in collaboration with the boss to bust the union. The reader is left to suppose that this is the usual way of auto-union organizers; but contemporary history supplies any needed correction. Among other distinguished con-



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tributors are Kay Boyle, Stefan Zweig, Isaac Babel, Mary Heaton Vorse, Liam O'Flaherty, Dorothy Thompson, and Panteleimon Romanov.

In the appended essay on "Writing the Short Story," Lillian Barnard Gilkes makes skillful use of the stories to illuminate technical questions. The unspectacular good sense of her generalizations can be summed up in her final quotation from Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction*: "The best form is that which makes the most of the subject—there is no other meaning of form in fiction."

Dr. Brewster's volume should prove widely useful outside as well as inside the classroom.

PHILIP STEVENSON.

With Benefit of Marxism

HISTORY OF FLORENCE FROM THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY THROUGH THE RENAISSANCE, by Ferdinand Schevill. Illustrated. Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$5.

IN his preface, Dr. Schevill denies a truly scientific character to history, declaring it to be more an art than a science—that is, too dependent upon the individuality of the historian for its data to resist manipulation as, let us say, the data of chemistry do. In his epilogue, accounting for the decline of the great city-state, he mentions the new orientation of world trade from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, and the development of competing industrialisms in the former markets of Florence; yet he prefers as an explanation the more mystical theory of spiritual energy running out. To him, Florence is an example of communal human genius subject to indefinable laws of growth and decay; and the fact that the term of its activity falls within a period when Italy enjoyed a favorable economic position, due to determinable geographical and historical causes, is mentioned as a concomitant but not decisively significant factor.

Such an attitude is unMarxian; yet in spite of it, Dr. Schevill's history shows the traces and the benefits of the growing Marxian influence upon historical writing. In spite of his announced plan to deal with his subject primarily as a political entity, and to deal with its economy as with its arts and learning, in separate chapters, the explanation of political action must again and again be made in terms of conditioning economic fact. Had he placed his economic chapter (XVII) at the beginning, it would have made the preceding sixteen chapters clearer.

The history of Florence is the history of a triumphant bourgeoisie. World trends after the eleventh century made possible a revival of trade and industry in Italy which became the chief bank, depot, and workshop of Europe for several centuries. Economic power enabled the bourgeoisie to overthrow the feudal aristocracy. The overthrow was so complete that enrollment into the unprivileged class of the nobility became a punishment, while transfer from the ranks of the nobility into the citizen body was an elevation.

Having defeated the aristocracy, the bour-

goisie had all the democracy it wanted. It systematically frustrated every effort of the masses to raise themselves to the guild status, to organize, to exercise the franchise, or to participate in any other way than as "hands" in the life of the city. Exploitation of the masses was indirect as well as direct. Taxation was chiefly in the form of indirect levies imposed with that "equality" beloved by the rich, upon all classes in the same amount. The bourgeois democracy was in practice an oligarchy of the leading bankers and industrialists; and the oligarchy became a tyranny under the Medici when the political situation in Italy demanded unified control.

First under communal, then under the princely patronage that continued it, learning and art flourished. But Florence made magnificent contributions to the world in coinage, business, and industrial technique as well as in learning and the arts. A distinct development toward capitalist industry as we understand it, was proceeding when the balance shifted and economic power inclined to western and northern Europe. The step into capitalism was to be taken by the northern inheritors.

Dr. Schevill writes with a real love of his subject. His style is graceful and fluent. He shows admirable selectivity in dealing with the overwhelming data that face the historian of Florence, one of the most articulate communities in history. His use of the Marxian key, though unacknowledged by him, provides a chain of causality that gives the work unusual clarity. Altogether, it is one of the distinguished pieces of historical writing of recent years.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Illegal "Justice"

VILLAINS AND VIGILANTES, by Stanton A. Coblentz. Wilson-Erickson. \$3.

IT is hardly necessary for this reviewer to remark upon the tremendous social significance and disastrous consequences of the growth of vigilanteism in California, for readers of a magazine which has ably reported its most recent incidences—El Centro, Salinas, Santa Rosa—and shown its complete incompatibility with what passes for Americanism. There is hardly a commentator on the scene in that state who does not see in its spread the ominous development of an indigenous fascism.

Oddly enough, despite the non-intellectual character of the movement, in its present setting it has been aided and abetted and made to seem "indigenous" by the historians of the early Vigilance Committees of 1851 and 1856. These historians include Hubert Howe Bancroft, whose books on California history form the nucleus of all public school courses in the subject, Josiah Royce, Theodore H. Hittell, and Mary Floyd Williams.

Today, whenever the tarring and feathering of labor supporters in a middle-class community occurs, or the disruption of a student peace demonstration, or the threat of a lynching, newspapers and the vigilante leaders lend encouragement to the deed by speaking of the

spirit of '56 pervading the community. There is thus a constant and remarkable interlacing of written history and contemporary action expressed in the vigilante movement.

Histories of the vigilantes possess more than academic or antiquarian interest. They have a considerable import in and to the present. For that reason, it is all the more necessary to reexamine that history. Mr. Coblentz is obviously aware of this need, for he says in the concluding pages of his book, bluntly and determinedly, what no other historian has said:

Today, the term Vigilante is used to denote almost everything that the original Vigilantes were not. Whenever bands of hired thugs and bullies are employed to put down strikes at a mine, we hear them referred to as Vigilantes; whenever a gang of desperadoes set out to inflict punishment on alleged Reds or Communists, again the term Vigilante is used; whenever a mob of race-inflamed southerners undertake to hang a Negro without the semblance of a trial, once more we hear mention of a Vigilance organization. And the perpetrators of a thousand and one diverse atrocities, while knowing nothing of the original Vigilance movement, use the name of Vigilance to justify them in their villainies.

Nevertheless, he has been content to accept the historical hypotheses of Bancroft & Co., to portray once again the old vigilantes as noble, honest, sincere men.

What were the concepts of "justice" which the vigilantes held? To cite a case from Mr. Coblentz's book: why were the laboring groups termed "mobs" when they attempted to apply justice to sea-captains accused of bestial treatment of seamen, while the application of penalties by the Vigilance Committee to Australian convicts (60 percent of whom had committed no worse offense than having fallen into debt) brought acclaim? To what extent did the formation of the vigilance committees coincide with increasing labor organization, as Ira B. Cross reveals in his excellent *History of the California Labor Movement*? Can we attach no significance to the fact that the leaders of the committees were ship-owners, merchants, financiers, and landlords at a period when labor shortage, high prices, financial manipulation, and crashes, and exorbitant rents prevailed? That, as Royce remarked, the extremes of concentrated wealth and dismal poverty had already appeared in the city—a circumstance later to bring forth the Single Tax theory?

Again, did the committees fulfill their own concept of honor? We know that they expended an average of five thousand dollars a month and that the manufacturers of uniforms and ammunition were extremely active among them. Even Bancroft admits that the financier to whom was entrusted the benefit funds collected for the widow of James King (crusading editor assassinated in the fifties) lost the major portion of them in security speculation. There are similar accusations made by O'Meara, an anti-Vigilante pamphleteer of the times; yet historians deny him even the courtesy of a *précis*.

Above all, there is the larger question of the probability of a reform movement initiated by the business men effecting a reform. If the city was purified in '56, whence came its cur-

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rent corruption? Were the merchants in '56 other than they are today? Would any sincere student of sociology, outside of the universities, propose to rid communities of crime by banishing thieves? Can any reader of Steffens, who found business and its civilization the stumbling block to real reform, suggest a period when business could reform itself?

In Mr. Coblenz's book, then, we are given not an insight into the effects of capitalism in its early setting in California, but a fairy-land of villains and vigilantes. If we view this past as having no resemblance or immediate relation to the present, then it must continually appear a land of Bret Harte fiction. Mr. Coblenz, indeed, has to start with this proposal:

And if the stranger in San Francisco will but pause to peer upon the phantom of yesterday, and will let it return to life in the contours of eighty or ninety years ago, he will witness a series of scenes not less fantastic and in some ways hardly less incredible than anything in the *Arabian Nights*.

It may be more difficult now to muck-rake the San Francisco of 1851 and 1856 than to repeat Bancroft's tales in one thousand and one books. But even Scheherazade must have become somewhat bored by and skeptical of her tales. And she had less to lose than we.

HARRY CONOVER.

Brief Review

THEATRE WORKSHOP: A QUARTERLY. *The New Theatre League*. 50c.

Under the able editorship of Mark Marvin, the New Theatre League has published the first number of a quarterly, *Theatre Workshop*. This most important periodical comes at the time when theater workers in this country are beginning to inquire again into the basic mechanics of their craft, an investigation long overdue.

Theatre Workshop gives over its first issue of ninety-six pages to the art of acting. I. Rapoport of the Vakhtangov Theater contributes a series of elementary and important exercises for the actor. V. I. Pudovkin, famed film director, writes on film acting. The case history of a role is described by A. S. Giatsinova of the Moscow Art Theater. There are invaluable reprints of articles by George Henry Lewes and Tommaso Salvini.

The format is designed by Stanley Burnshaw, and Lee Strasberg contributes a helpful and clarifying introduction. There is an excellent book review section but no play review department.

It is obvious that in *Theatre Workshop* we find a theater document which must become part of the library of everyone who has more than a cursory interest in the arts.

M. B.

**Recently Recommended Books**

- The Crisis in the Socialist Party*, by William Z. Foster. Workers Library Publishers. 5c.
Landlord and Peasant in China, by Chen Han-Seng. International. \$2.
Biology and Human Behavior, by Mark Graubard. Tomorrow. \$2.50.
Nursery School and Parent Education in Soviet Russia, by Vera Fediaevsky and Patty Smith Hill. Dutton. \$2.50.
Sam Adams, Pioneer in Propaganda, by John C. Miller. Little, Brown. \$4.
The Theory and Practice of Socialism, by John Strachey. Random House. \$3.
Art and Society: A Marxist Analysis, by George Plekhanov, with an introduction by Granville Hicks. Critics' Group. Cloth \$1; paper 35c.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The Theatre Guild goes proletarian—Musical meanderings—The Black Legion and Shan-Kar

THE most interesting of the recent Broadway openings is the Theatre Guild's *But for the Grace of God*. This is a definitely proletarian play by thirty-year-old Leopold Atlas, who studied under Baker at Yale, and who won some acclaim with his *Wednesday's Child*. It is the story of a working-class Irish family the head of which is unemployed and the children of which eke out the family's existence, along with other children of other families, at a gang lathe in a small millinery-display-rack factory. One son is taken seriously ill (and later dies) because of the conditions of work there, and the other son leaves school to step into his shoes. But the latter makes an effort to burst the class confines of illness and poverty by joining an adolescents' burglary and holdup gang. He murders his employer as much, it is suggested, as a gesture of protest and revenge as for purposes of robbery, and falls into the toils of the law. The play closes as he is apprehended, and his curtain line, shouted as a slogan to inspire his broken parents, is "Give 'em hell!" Earlier in the play, the father, a trade unionist, has decided to meet the family crisis by going to work as a scab, but is dissuaded from doing it by his wife after a visit from a strikers' delegation. The employer is of the petty-bourgeois stamp, and his place in competition with larger employers is adequately sketched. The youngsters who work in the factory and circulate in the neighborhood are real, and in this respect the play shows a kinship with *Dead End*.

In point of social understanding, however, the play is on a higher level than *Dead End*, but it is interesting, in view of John Howard Lawson's comment in our issue of January 5 on the anthology of Theatre Guild plays, to note that the political level to which the lines ascend is not notably high. There is realistic class-consciousness, but the expression of it, except when the wife persuades her husband not to scab, is in fairly primitive terms. It is quite true that such a son might join a robbers' gang as his way out of economic submersion, and that his slogan for action against the state power which serves the property interests of the bourgeoisie might be "Give 'em hell!" But some other questions remain. I don't know whether Mr. Atlas thinks that art should serve a social purpose, but I suspect he does. If that suspicion is correct, it is appropriate to ask him whether he doesn't think, first, that portraying a more scientific and effective form of action by the proletarian elements would not be socially more useful because more instructive, and, second, whether he doesn't think that the mass action and the more world-historic sloganizing which would accompany such an approach would enhance the purely dramatic values of a play on such a theme. (After all, "Give 'em hell!" is not a

wow of a curtain line.) But when these questions have been answered, a basic one still remains: would the Theatre Guild sponsor a proletarian play, even though more dramatic, which was based upon effective rather than futile forms of action, and in which the slogans would be scientific rather than primitive? On the basis of the record, we doubt it; but we should be happy to be proved wrong.

In its own terms, however, it is a worthwhile play, and it is good news that the Federal Theater Project has been seriously considering putting it on in half a dozen other cities. One of the most interesting things about it is the way the factory scene, with the dozen or more kids shoulder to shoulder at the lathe, gets over the feeling of the way machine industry and its socialized work breed a common consciousness for action to win socialized fruits of that work. Director Benno Schneider and Designer Stewart Chaney have done a lot to get the most out of the script, and while it would be invidious to single out for individual mention any individuals of the competent and well-balanced acting company, it is a comfort to be able to report that with the performances the youngsters give, the future of the acting profession here seems to be in good hands.

Melvin (*Gold Eagle Guy*) Levy's *A House in the Country*, which closed after a five-day run, was a pleasant if unimportant little comedy melodrama about what happened when a trio of New York policy racketeers fled to their hideout in Bucks County, Pa., and found it inhabited by a family of squatters. It was a little over-obvious, but the chief trouble was that it lacked the wallop which Broadway audiences demand in such affairs. It had all the makings, however, and no doubt a couple of Hollywood script writers could fashion an entertaining movie from it. If we seem to be spending an inordinate amount of space talking about such a play, it is not because we know Mr. Levy to be a left-winger, but because in the characters, and especially that of

the shiftless grandpappy, the author worked out fairly fully a set of people who seemed authentic. The grandpappy, lovingly played by Tom Powers, first won our heart by his devotion to the mutilated corpse of a shotgun that he had picked up on the town dump and was trying to resurrect; he became permanently enshrined when, on the entrance of the chief mobster, sawed-off shotgun menacingly in hand, grandpappy, far from shrinking, fell forthrightly in love with the handsome weapon, and would not rest until he was cradling it in his own arms. Which, of course, was the beginning of the end. That idea and the way it was worked out seemed top-flight.

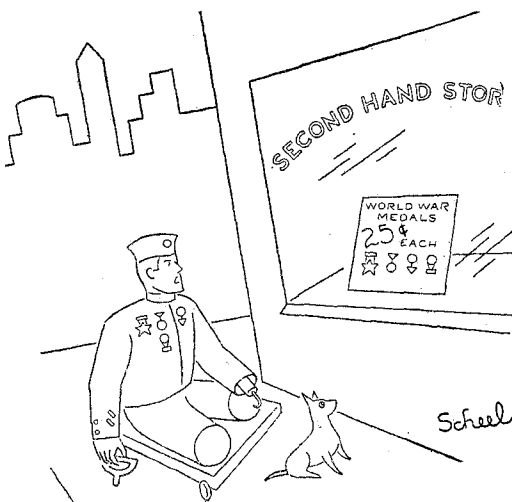
The other offerings of the week, *Behind Red Lights* and *Howdy Stranger*, don't seem to require much comment. Both of them may entertain you and neither of them will hurt you. The first, by dat ole devil Samuel Shipman and Beth Brown, is a melodrama based on the organized prostitution business. It starts off with what looks like an exposé of the racket and of the hypocrisy of those reformers who attack merely its superficial aspects without attacking its economic causes. This phase of the play comes to its climax when the madam of a classy joint bawls out the special prosecutor for not getting after "respectable" employers who work girls for sixty hours a week for fifteen dollars. There are several remarks along this line, and when the prosecutor remarks that she talks like some kind of Communist, she replies that she sometimes gets her red lights and her red flags mixed up. There was a genuine flutter in the audience at this that was a response not to a lame gag but to the whole line of reasoning which this line climaxed. But don't get the idea that this viewpoint characterizes the play as a whole. From that point on it becomes a love and murder melodrama which, however, has the grace not to force a happy ending that would have been impossible.

Howdy Stranger, by Robert Sloane and Louis Pelletier, Jr., is a farce about a dude ranch and a singing Brooklyn cowboy that is chiefly a vehicle for the talents of the radio tenor Frank Parker. It has a few belly laughs and some pleasant singing, but not enough cowboy songs. Mr. Louis Sorin is the star performer, and he is very good. We also liked very much the little red dogie who was hauled reluctantly onstage at the final curtain.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

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nating, an uncommutable death sentence on its subject and a miraculous example of stylistic perfection and gusto, music critics and laymen alike will find their suffering through the first half of the film *Born to Dance* fabulously repaid by the brief but glorious moments in which Reginald Gardiner writes a pantomimic end to the artistic career of Leopold Stokowski. I had not forgotten Dr. Stokowski's recent studies in the inflation of Bach and Vivaldi, nor the coy photographs adorning the very de luxe souvenir program book of his Madison Square Garden concert last fall, but the fear that Mr. Gardiner must surely have been unjustly cruel could only be dispelled by the visual testimony of Dr. Stokowski himself in *The Big Broadcast of 1937*. The genius who conceived and actually executed the quaint notion of personifying locomotives, wall paper, and lighthouses erred in only one respect: he was consciously funny.

After Mr. Gardiner, any essayist in destructive criticism might just as well shut up shop. It seems futile to snarl, as I had been infuriated to snarl, over the second half of Hans Lange's January 4 concert with the Philharmonic-Symphony Chamber Orchestra. The puerilities of Honegger and Milhaud had best be forgotten in the pretense that one heard only the works by Stamitz, Handel, and Haydn. It seems scarcely worth the trouble to chronicle the fact that the conducting was not on a par with the really exquisite performances of some of the players—notably that rotund little sorcerer Mr. Bruno Labate, whose oboe playing is one of the miracles of our day. Hearing Labate in the recently exhumed Handel oboe concerto or with three Philharmonic colleagues in the *Sinfonia Concertante* ascribed to Mozart (Philharmonic concert December 31) my pleasure was tempered only by the restriction of such impeccable musicianship to a single orchestral instrument. Superb instrumental playing can never be a drug on the market, but at least it is not uncommon, whereas craftsmanly phrasing, accurate and assured intonation, and the subtleties of true tone coloring are all too seldom achieved by vocalists—soloists, madrigal ensembles, large choruses alike.

Scanning New York's offerings, at this moment I can safely commend the most discriminating concert-goer to the two remaining recitals of Josef Szigeti on January 23 and 30 (afternoon), and to the "classic guitar" recital of Martinez Oyanguren (January 23, evening). I am not familiar with the playing of Isa McIlwraith, but his (or her) Bach and pre-Bach organ programs (Society for Ethical Culture, January 24, February 28, and April 25) are decidedly admirable and attractive.

But what is there to say about choral performances? To be sure the daily press got all excited when the Schola Cantorum put on part of the Monteverdi *Vespers* (January 13), but altogether apart from the fact that the Schola's performances seldom rise above the level of passable, the tragedy is that such works are heard once—if at all—in ten or fifteen or more years. The standard orchestral, operatic,

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piano, even *Lieder* repertoires are thoroughly dusted off in the course of a season or two, but apart from a handful of concerts by the Schola, Desoffi Choirs, English Singers, and a few others, what exposition do we get of the great choral and madrigal literatures? The only promising source is our one significant subsidized choral repertory company, the W.P.A. Madrigal Group. Under Lehman Engel's direction, this ensemble has some notable achievements to its credit, most important perhaps its cantata performances with the former Bach Chamber Orchestra, a token that it is equipped even at present to embark upon the extensive cantata series we need so badly. But it needs further development and in any case it cannot shoulder the choral burden alone.

It is little enough to ask that we have an opportunity to hear as many Bach cantatas as we have of hearing Verdi or Puccini operas, to hear the *Magnificat* at least as often as, say, Brahms's Fourth or Beethoven's Seventh. I, for one, want that and more. I have just heard—via l'Anthologie Sonore recordings—a mass by Guillaume de Machault: music shattering in its impact, firing the imagination with its daring, flooding one's narrow life with a sudden terrifying vision of grandeur and immensity. Even disks fail me when I seek a hearing of another titanic work that bursts the circumscribed horizons of one's sensibilities: Christophorus Morales's *Emendemus in Melius*. But set up a cry for performances of works like these and one is accused of pedantry or preciousness. Now that we are beginning to laugh our poseur conductors off the boards and to realize the limitations of sterile concert repertoires, it is time for the great choral masterpieces to be taken out of libraries and occasional museum-like concert exhibitions and thrown open to the public. They are not *Augenmusik* nor merely historically interesting; they are works meant to be sung and to be heard, needing only an articulate medium to speak to us with the tongues of men and angels.

R. D. DARRELL.

THE SCREEN

THOSE astute Hollywood sociologists, Warner Brothers, contribute another film comment on the current American scene, *Black Legion*. Whatever may have been the purposes of the producers, one can say that at least the aims and purposes of the film (if a film can be said to possess them) are high and commendable. And if you are content with a superficial analysis, you might say that as Hollywood films go, *Black Legion* is a courageous contribution to the American social film—especially if you remember Columbia's cheap melodrama on the same subject called *The Legion of Terror*. This new film has been, at least, produced with more care and intelligence than the earlier "quickie." The scenarists have cleverly incorporated a great deal of the testimony from the recent trial of killer Dean and other members of the Black Legion (for the murder of Poole, the Detroit W.P.A. worker) into their own little story. But

therein lies the film's essential weakness: how much the audience gets from it will depend largely upon how much it knows about the facts. However, there is no denying that the general effect of the film will be good. In the words of the judge who condemns the ideals of the Legion: "Unless all of these illegal and extra-legal forces are ruthlessly wiped out, this nation may as well abandon its constitution, forget its bill of rights, tear down its courts of justice, and revert to the barbarism of government by primitive violence."

You are never told that the story is laid in Detroit nor that Frank Taylor (Humphrey Bogart) works in an automobile factory. You can guess all that if you know what the inside of such a factory looks like and that Michigan is one of the few states where there is no capital punishment (the killers get life). Taylor is drawn into the Legion because of his hatred for foreigners.

The Legion is shown burning the Dombrowski home and running father and son out of town. One thing leads to another. Taylor is forced to horsewhip his neighbor. There follows a series of domestic situations which finally lead to the murder of his best friend, Ed (played by Dick Foran). He is brought to trial. The Legion supplies the lawyer and the alibi. On the stand, however, he turns state's evidence and points out the members of the Black Legion who are present in the courtroom.

In the main, *Black Legion* follows the pattern of the Warner sociological series which was inaugurated by *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*. The director and the writers have drawn upon Fritz Lang's *Fury* for their treatment of the trial. But *Black Legion* is no *Fury*. Director Archie Mayo hasn't Lang's technical equipment, nor have the producers Lang's social point of view. Like other "topical" films, *Black Legion* reduces the social theme to personal and individual melodrama. The Black Legion is never given its true political significance. But *Black Legion*, like *Fury* and even *The General Died at Dawn*, again shows us how effective and useful melodrama can be used for social themes.

The Swiss *Eternal Mask* (at the Filmarte, N. Y.) is also, in its way, a courageous film with a high purpose. It attempts to portray the subconscious mind and to discuss the values of the newer psychiatric therapy as opposed to the older method of suggestion in curing a case of schizophrenia. The feeling one is left with after seeing *The Eternal Mask* is that the director has produced his film with a great deal of sincerity, honesty, and a feeling for social purpose. Since this film is about life in a hospital and concerns the work of doctors, both progressive and conservative, it is inevitable that *The Eternal Mask* will be compared with *Men in White*. The shallowness of the latter and the deep sincerity of this new film become obvious upon comparison. The conflict arises when Dr. Dumartin (played by Mathia Wieman) administers his meningitis serum to a hopeless case against the wishes of the hospital director. The patient

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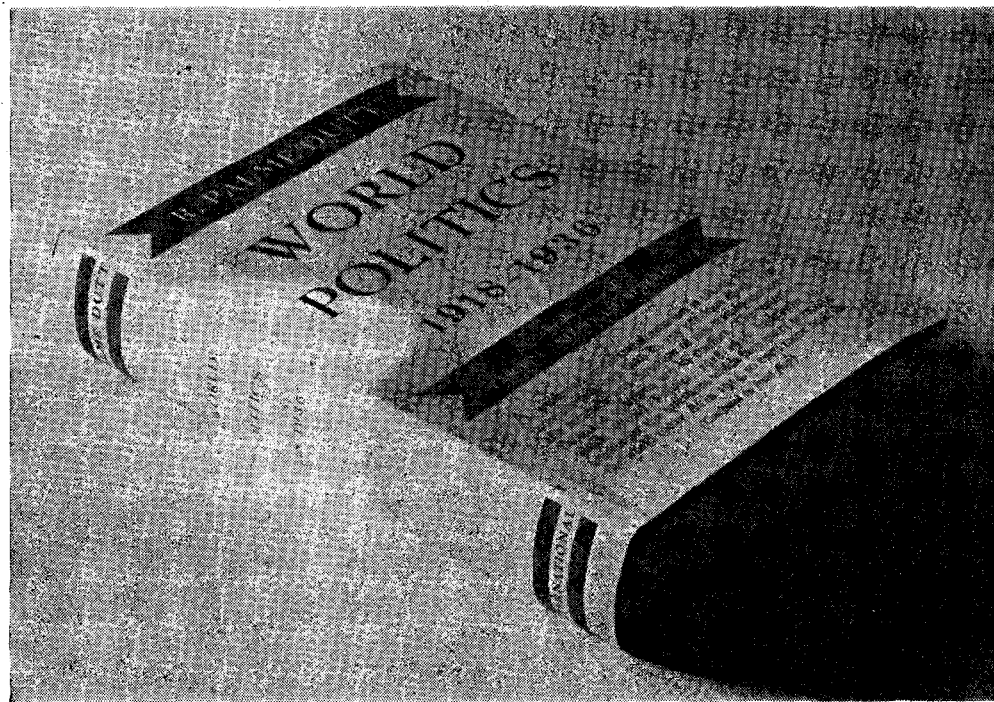
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dies; the accusations of murder from the patient's wife and the newspapers drives the young physician from the hospital and affects his mind. From there, the film is essentially a record of the subconscious. In the main, Director Werner Hochbaum has been successful in his portrayal, but many of his images are questionable. It is the cure which is the weakest part of the film. Somehow it isn't as convincing as it might have been.

This, like Pabst's early film, *Secrets of a Soul*, which portrayed the psychoanalytic treatment of a patient with a knife-complex, is a valuable contribution to a branch of the cinema in which little has been done. This lack is a pity, for there is no better medium than the cinema to dramatize the mind, conscious as well as subconscious.

Cecil B. DeMille's *The Plainsman* (Paramount) is a shallow, superficial attempt to present a so-called romantic chapter of American history: the expansion of the West. It is colossal in the typical DeMille manner. But it will "get" the audience since it is built upon a sure-fire formula: a group of brave fighters against tremendous odds. This is the story of Wild Bill Hickok (Gary Cooper), Calamity Jane (Jean Arthur), and Buffalo Bill (James Ellison). Placed against a background of gun-runners, killings, Custer's Last Stand, *The Plainsman* emerges as a gaudy "western" with epic pretensions. One of its most disgusting features is the chauvinistic attitude toward the Indian. There is a concession to the times in the first ten minutes of the film, where we are shown a meeting of Lincoln's cabinet discussing what to do with the superfluous labor power (the returning soldiers from the Civil War). There is also a sharply drawn episode of unscrupulous munitions makers who unload their arms to the Indians. The outstanding thing in the film is Gary Cooper's magnificent performance as Wild Bill. Jean Arthur as Calamity Jane is miscast.

One In a Million (20th Century-Fox) marks Sonja Henie's debut as an actress. It is a generally unsatisfactory musical comedy in which the Ritz Brothers are the outstanding feature. *Broken Blossoms* (now at the Belmont Theatre, New York), a new English version of the old Griffith film, introduces the brilliant Dutch actress, Dolly Haas, in her first dramatic role. Since the producers make a great deal of noise about the early silent version, I should like to withhold discussion until next week when I will have seen the Griffith film again.

PETER ELLIS.

THE DANCE

UDAY SHAN-KAR and his Hindu Ballet, after an absence of three years, opened their American tour by presenting a concert of folk, character, and religious dances—and to an ovation.

Technically, Shan-Kar is brilliant; no waste to his movement, he has a skill for ease and a certain delicacy which accompanies a poignancy rather than a restraint. His rhythms (and sometimes he must have four rhythms going at

the same time—his hands and his feet and his head and his arms—perhaps more than four distinct rhythms) as a performance are amazing. There is no other word for it. Add the brilliant costumes, the color, the strange instruments and their stranger complex sounds and rhythms; add the gratifying dancing of Simkie, whose technique is second only to Shan-Kar's and whose body movement is extremely happy, and it is not difficult to understand the enthusiasms of an audience that has worked up a sort of Shan-Kar cult.

Of course, there is something exciting about an exotic background and a startling virtuosity; there is pleasant simplicity in the folk dances (*Snanum*, *Marwari*, *Harvest Dance*, etc.); there is humor in the loose dramatic structure of the pantomimic *Shiva Parvati Nryttya Dwandva*, the religious dance competition. The vitality, however, the audience has come to expect, with a knowledge of the contemporary scene, is lacking; the concert for all its brilliance smacks of nostalgia. The audience applauds technique and decor, not substance.

Lotte Goslar does whatever dancing there is in Erika Mann's continental variety show, *Pepper Mill* (which will be on at the New School in New York the evenings of January 22, 23, and 24), and is entertaining enough in mime compositions of rather slight comment such as "Disgruntled," "Intoxication," "The Little Circus Dancer" and the encored "Dance of the Virgin."

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